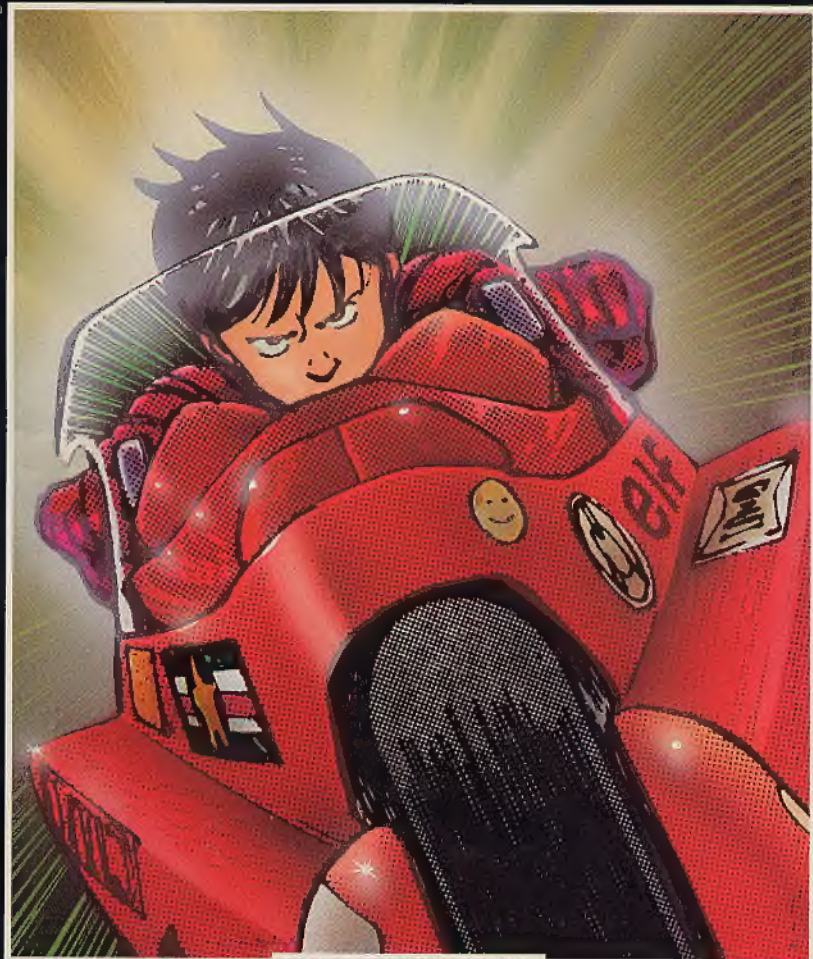



# AKIRA 5™



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KATSUHIRO OTOMO



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# AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

CHAPTER 5

## CYCLE WARS

## WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

**T**he year is 2030. The world is rebuilding from World War III. In **Neo-Tokyo**, plans are being made to hold the next Olympics in the "old city"—where, thirty-eight years before, the first of the bombs fell.

**Kaneda** and his friends, teenage delinquents, make an unauthorized motorcycle run into the old city to check out the old site. They encounter a terrified child, known only as **Number 26**, possessing extraordinary telekinetic abilities. During the encounter, the paranormal boy gravely injures **Tetsuo**, one of Kaneda's close friends. Then, he vanishes.

The next night, at **Harukiya**, a tough local dive, **Kaneda** attempts, unsuccessfully, to pick up a newcomer, **Kay**. In fact, she and her companion, **Ryu**, are part of an underground resistance group dedicated to learning what is happening in the old city

and putting a stop to it.

Trouble ensues, and both delinquents and resistance fighters again encounter **Number 26**. **Ryu** attempts to reassure the paranormal boy, but **Kaneda** is anxious to punish him for injuring **Tetsuo**. As they argue, mysterious soldiers pursuing **Number 26** reach the scene, armed and ready. A fire-fight results.

Then the ominous **Colonel** in charge of the covert operation appears with a secret weapon—**Number 27**, a crippled paranormal child named **Masaru**. **Masaru** astonishes the resistance fighters by addressing **Number 26** as **Takashi**. **Kay** and **Ryu** had previously assumed that **Number 26** was the Colonel's ultimate weapon—the as-yet unseen paranormal giant code-named **Akira**.

**Kaneda** provokes a crisis by pretending to threaten **Takashi**, who is exhibiting symptoms of drug withdrawal. **Takashi** responds with telekinetic upheavals. **Kaneda** is again separated from the resistance fighters, but he manages to intercept and hide a pill meant for **Takashi**, who is recaptured by the Colonel's men.

The next day, **Tetsuo**—who following his accident was taken to a hospital by soldiers—reappears in school, seemingly



Kaneda



Tetsuo



Kay



Ryu



all right. However, during **Tetsuo's** treatment, the **Colonel** has learned that the delinquent has great psychic potential.

**Kaneda** has a girlfriend in the school infirmary analyze the drug intended for **Takashi**. It is similar in substance to pills **Kaneda** and his friends take, but unbelievably concentrated and powerful.

Eager for action, **Kaneda**, **Tetsuo** and their gang head out for a rumble with their chief rivals—the vicious **Clown** gang.

A member of the **Clowns** comes and begins to beat **Tetsuo**. **Kaneda** and the rest of his friends rescue **Tetsuo**, who astonishes them, first by displaying an uncharacteristic bloodthirstiness, and then by challenging Kaneda's authority.

Determined not to let a new human weapon escape him, the **Colonel** goes to the school the next day to collect **Tetsuo**.

Under the treatments of the Colonel's chief medical officer, **Tetsuo** begins to exhibit powerful psychic abilities...and to undergo great pain.

Meanwhile, **Kaneda**, trying to spy on the **Colonel** and learn what is happening to **Tetsuo**, re-encounters the members of the resistance, and is brought back to their headquarters. Questioned by **Ryu**, he denies all knowledge of the

stolen drug.

**Kiyoko**, another of the psychic children under the Colonel's control, announces to her master the disastrous news that **Akira**—who is asleep, and expected to remain so for some time—is going to awaken in the near future. Meanwhile, at the resistance hideout, **Kaneda** encounters a ghost-like apparition of himself, shouting Akira's name.

When soldiers enter the resistance hideout in force, **Kaneda** and **Kay** manage together to escape to **Harukiya**, where the bartender agrees to shelter them.

Overwhelmed by pain, **Tetsuo** breaks out of the Colonel's installation, leaving death in his wake. When he is cornered alone in the street by the **Clown** Gang, **Tetsuo** uses his burgeoning powers to slaughter those who oppose him. He takes control of the gang, letting them live in return for the massive amounts of drugs required to stave off his agony.

**Kaneda**, anxious to recover the motorcycle he left behind when he "joined" the resistance, eludes **Kay**. He is nearly caught by soldiers in the underground tunnels. **Kay** gets to the lost bike first, and when **Kaneda** joins her, they are able to escape again.



Takashi



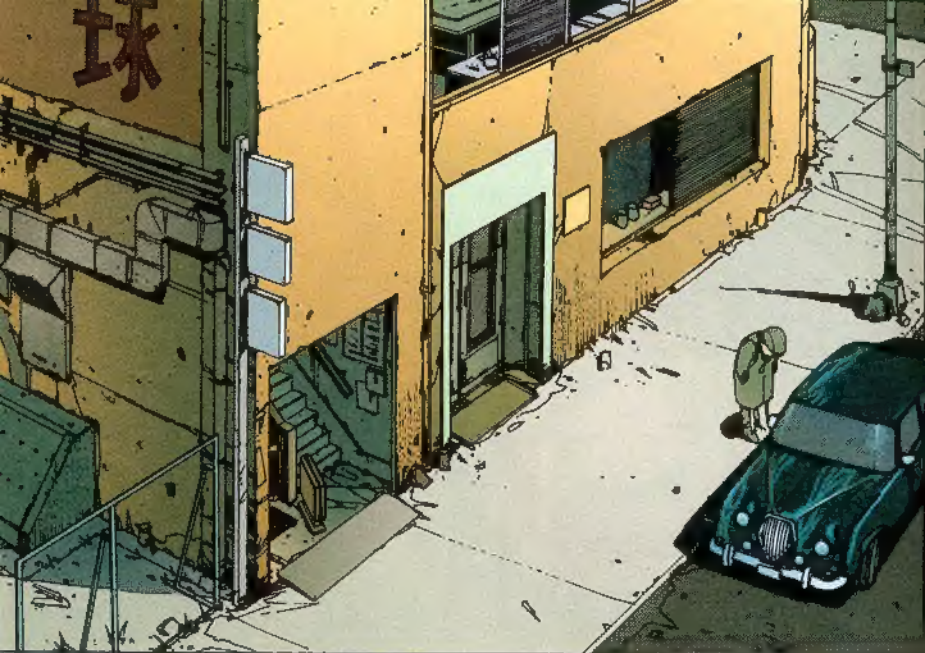
The Colonel

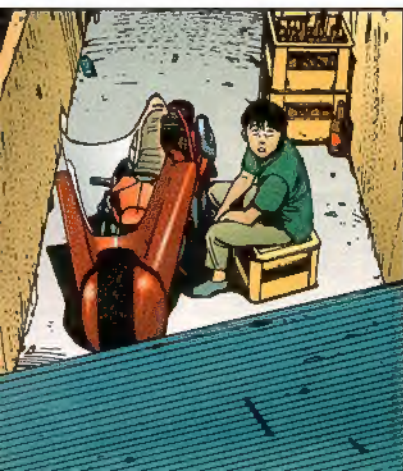
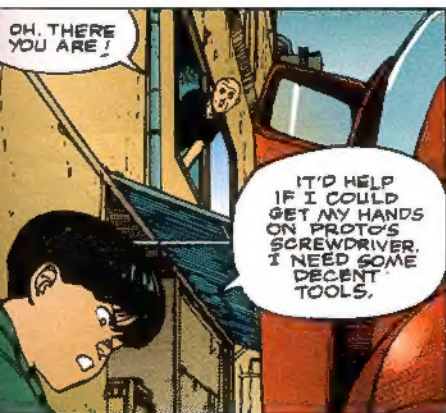
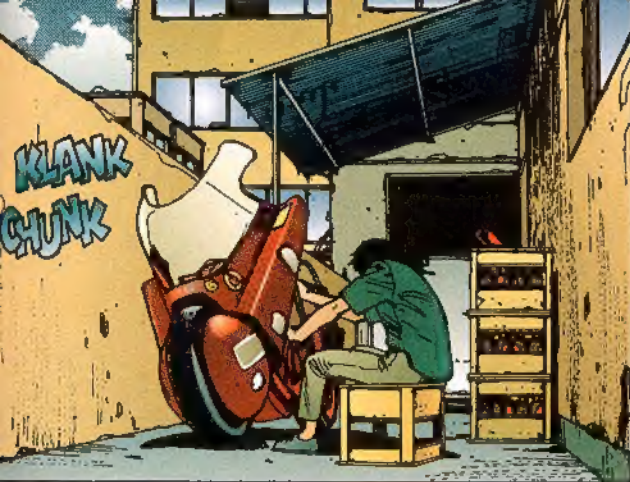


Masaru



Yamagata

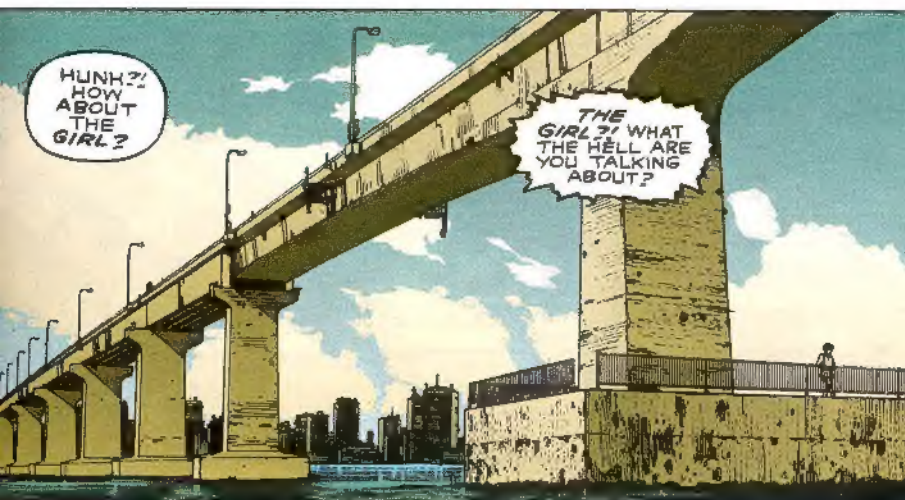






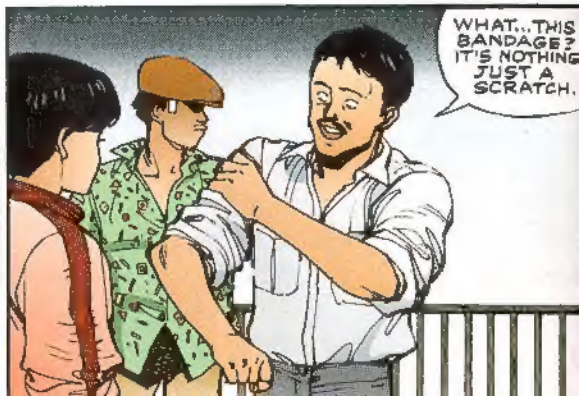
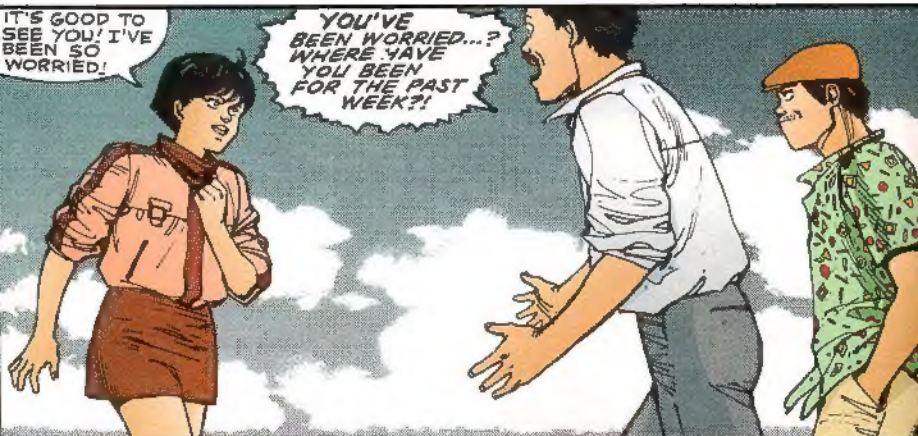




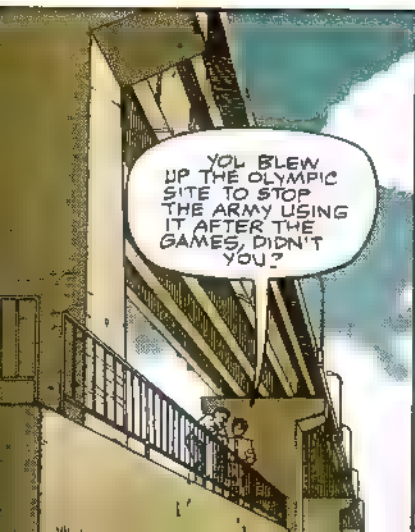
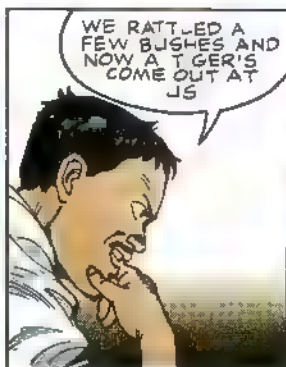
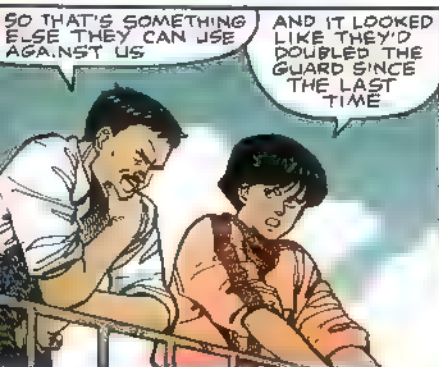
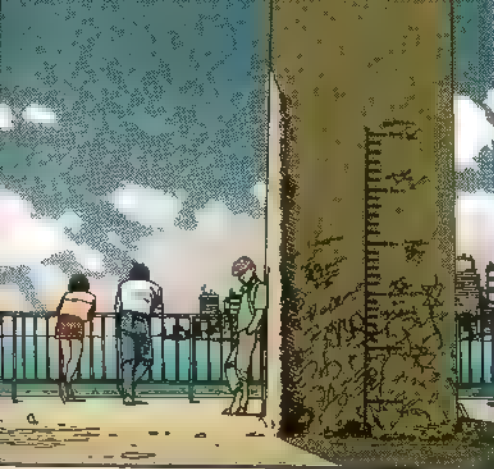




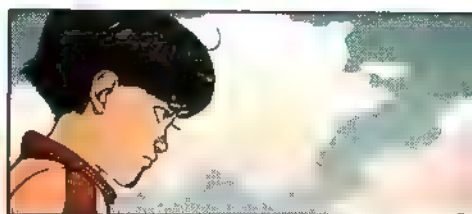
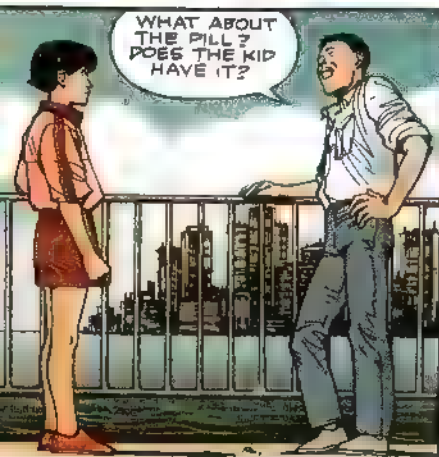
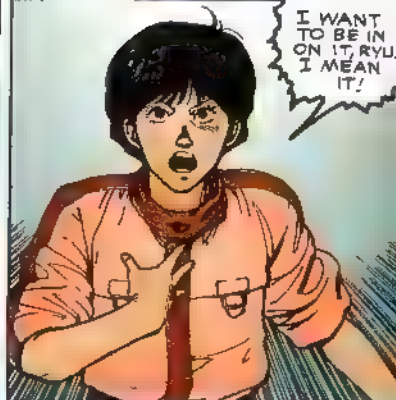
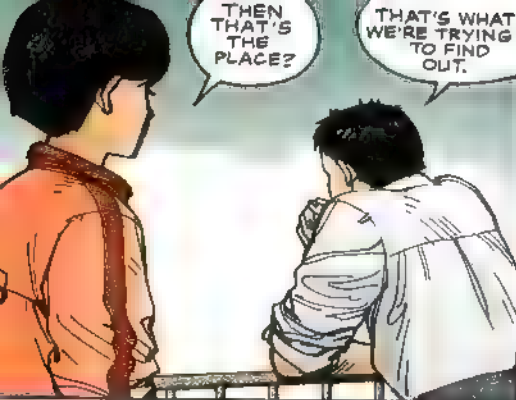
IT'S GOOD TO  
SEE YOU! I'VE  
BEEN SO  
WORRIED!

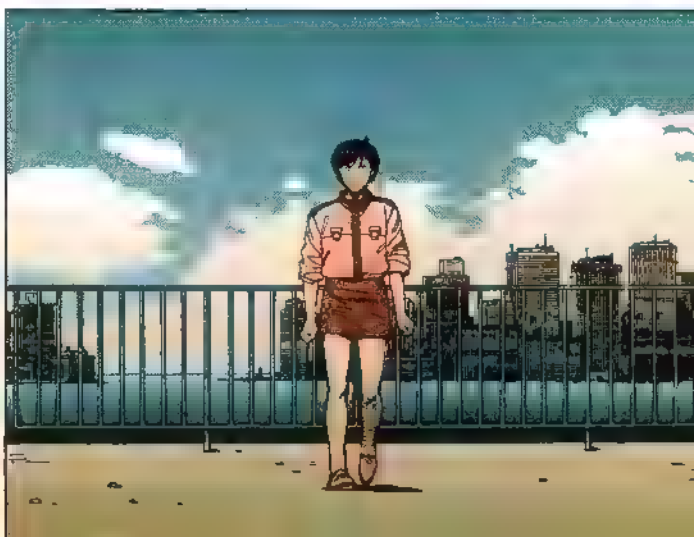
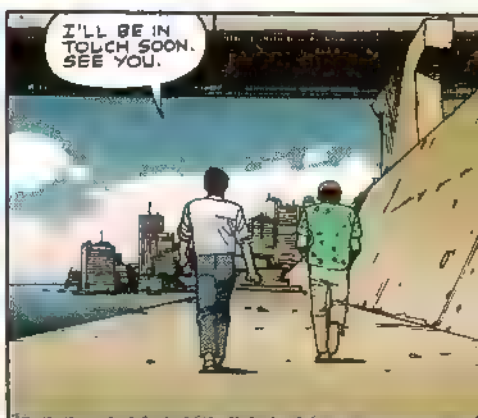
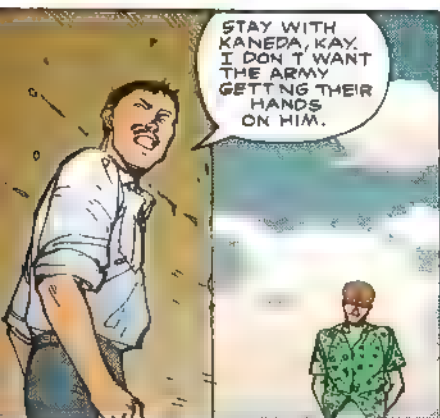
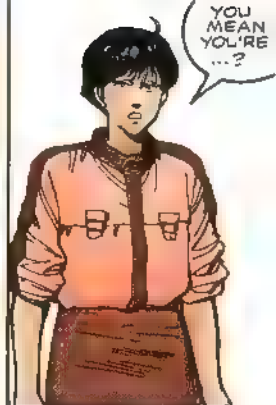


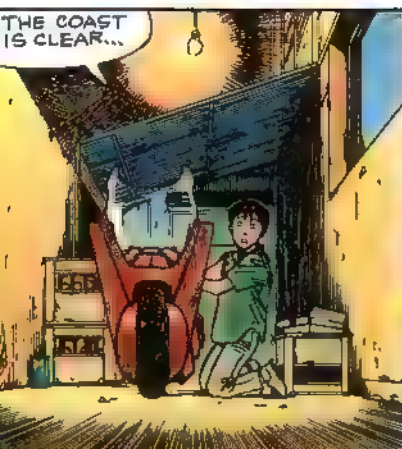
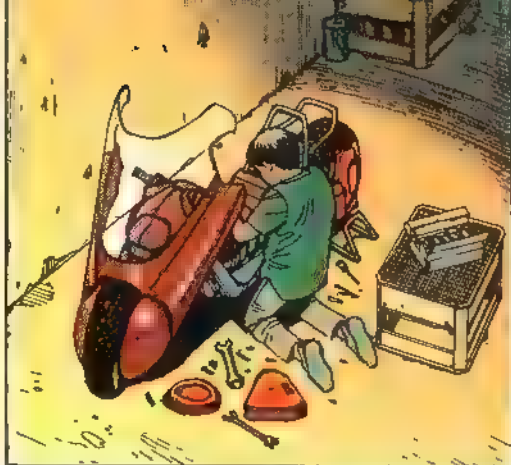




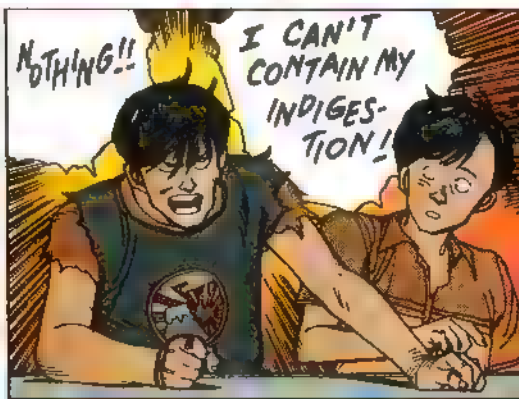
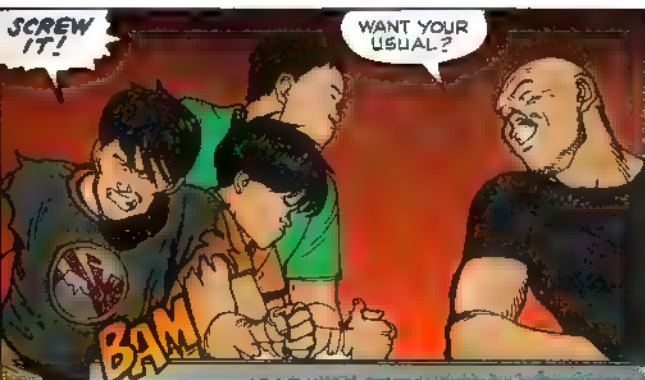
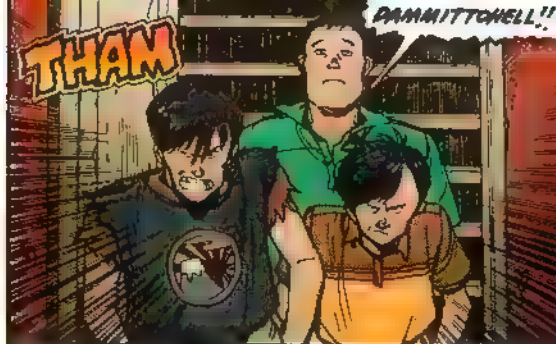


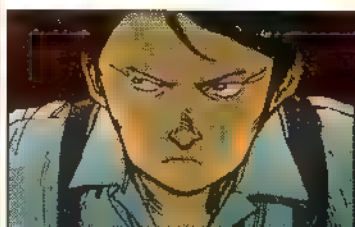
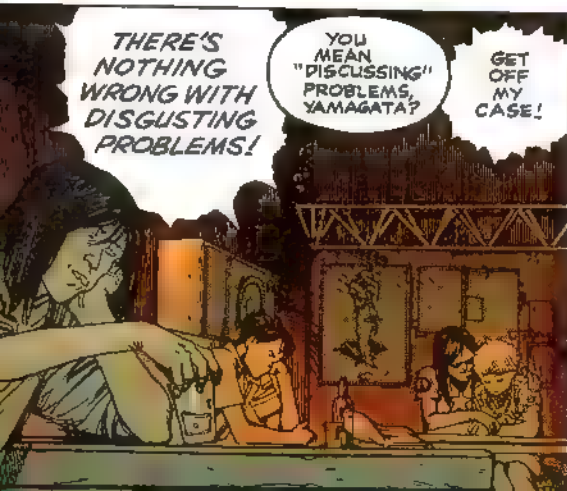
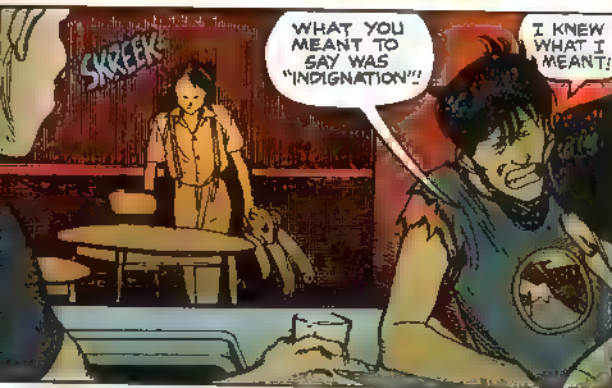
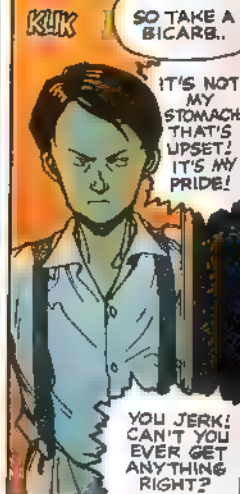
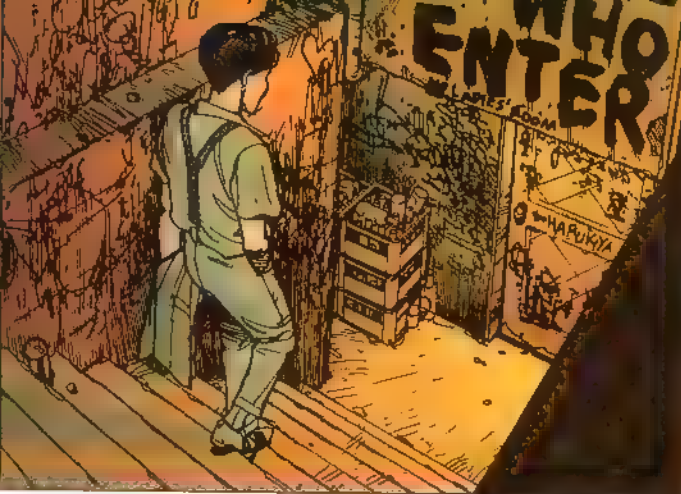


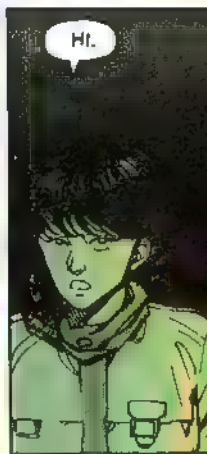
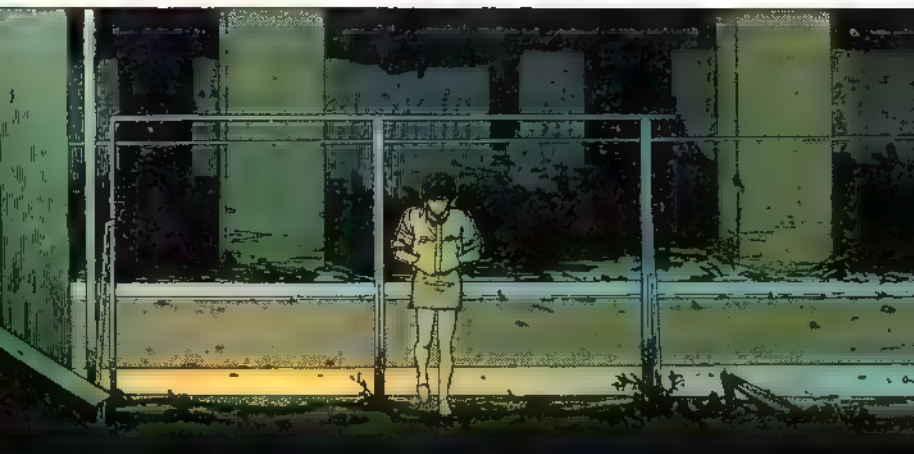
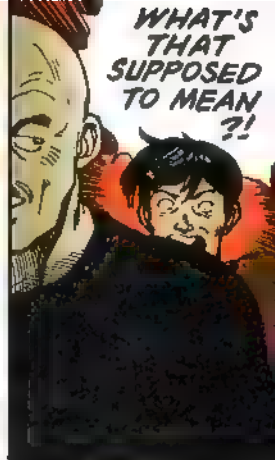




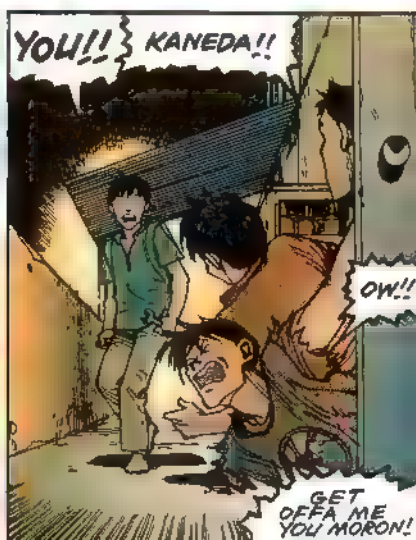
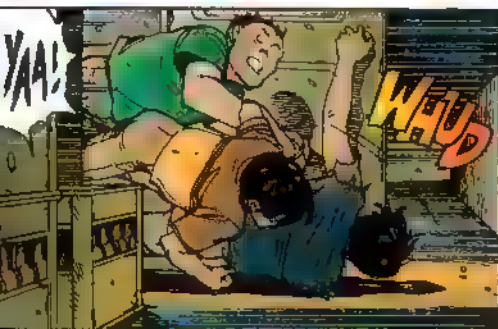
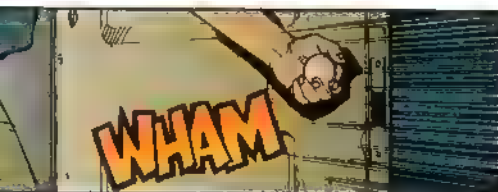
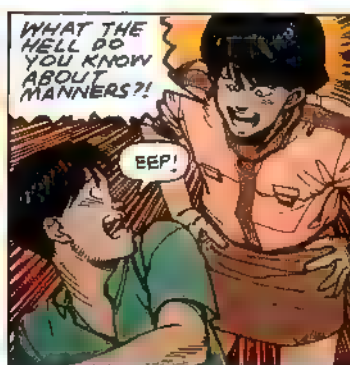
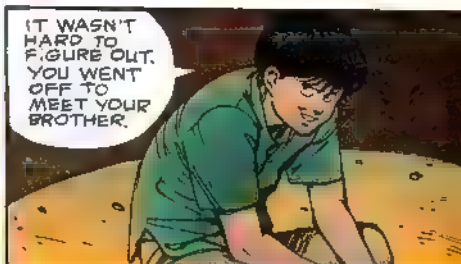
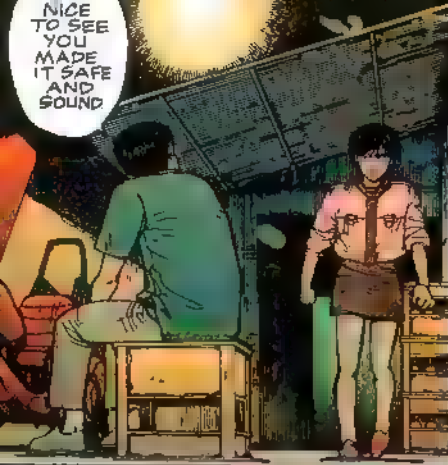


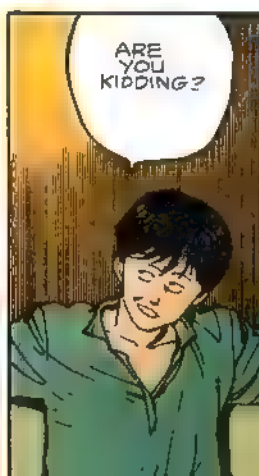
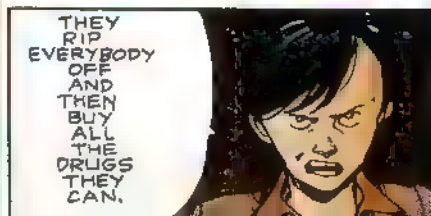
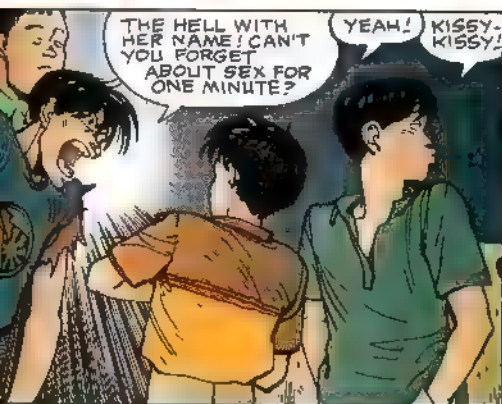
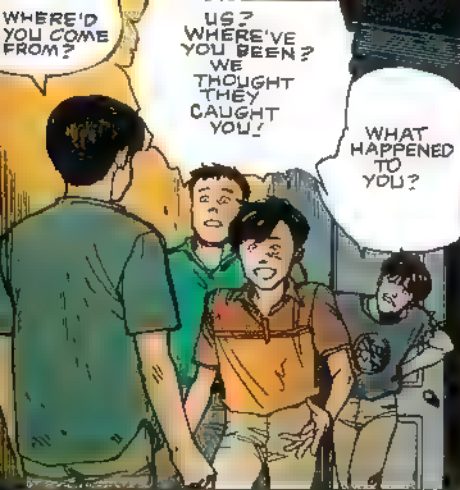


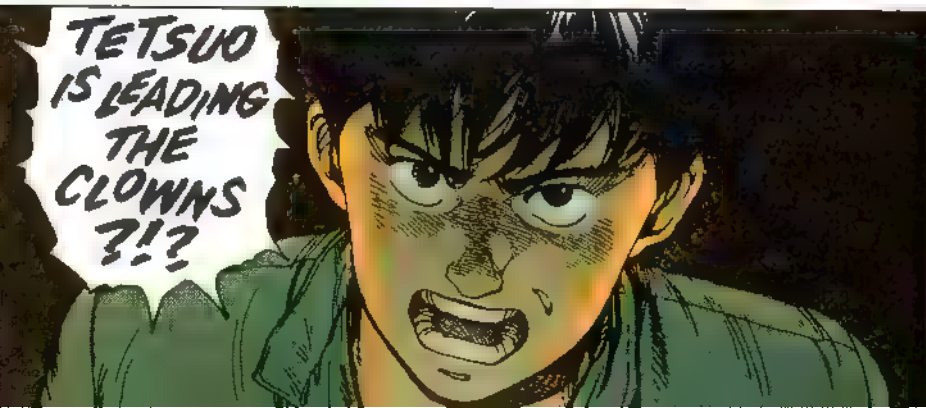
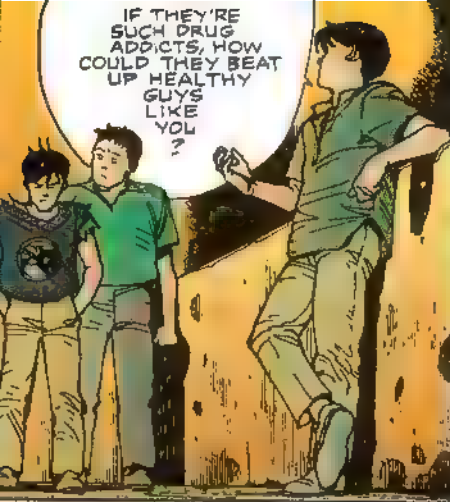








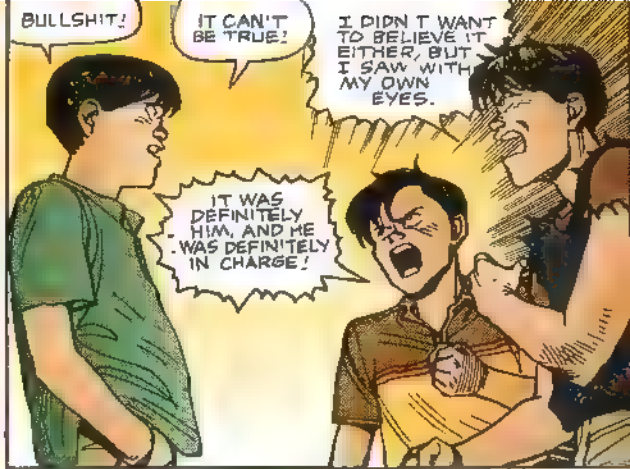








KANEDA!



BULLSHIT!

IT CAN'T BE TRUE!

I DIDN'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT EITHER, BUT I SAW WITH MY OWN EYES.

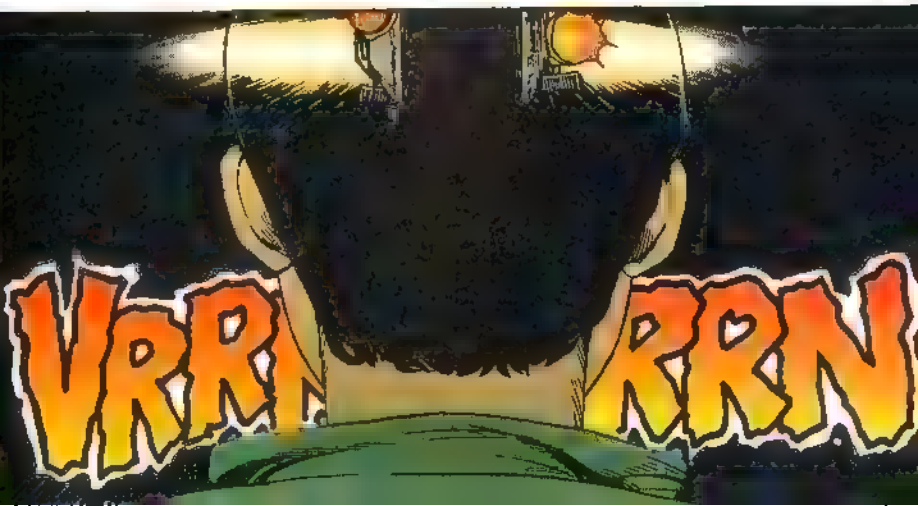
IT WAS DEFINITELY HIM, AND HE WAS DEFINITELY IN CHARGE!



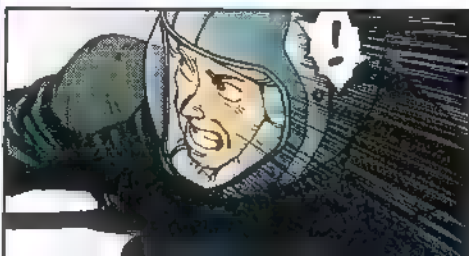
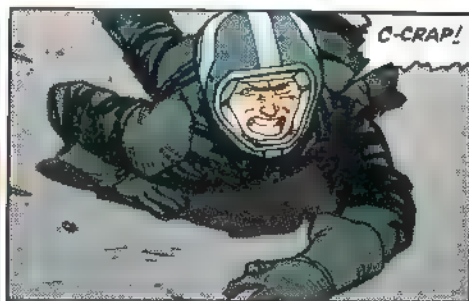
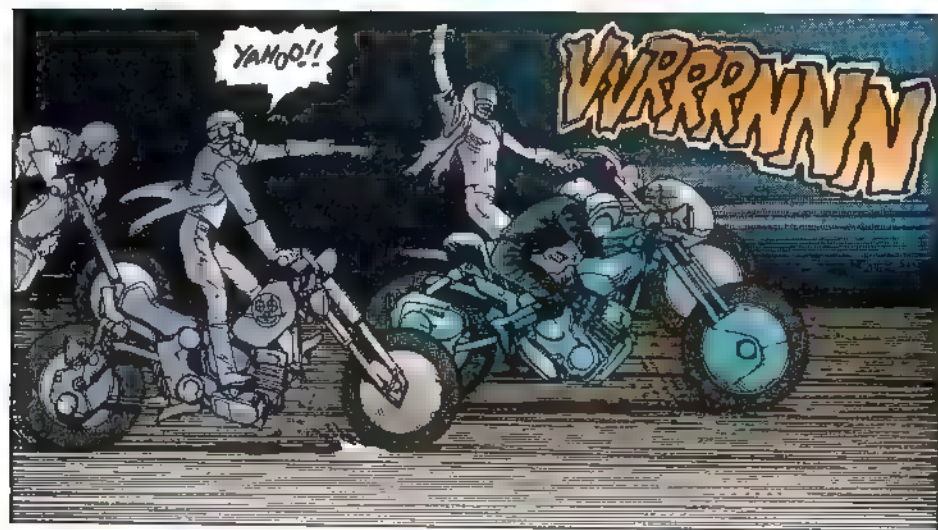
I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE HIM AT FIRST. SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO HIM. HE'S CHANGED.

BUT THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT!

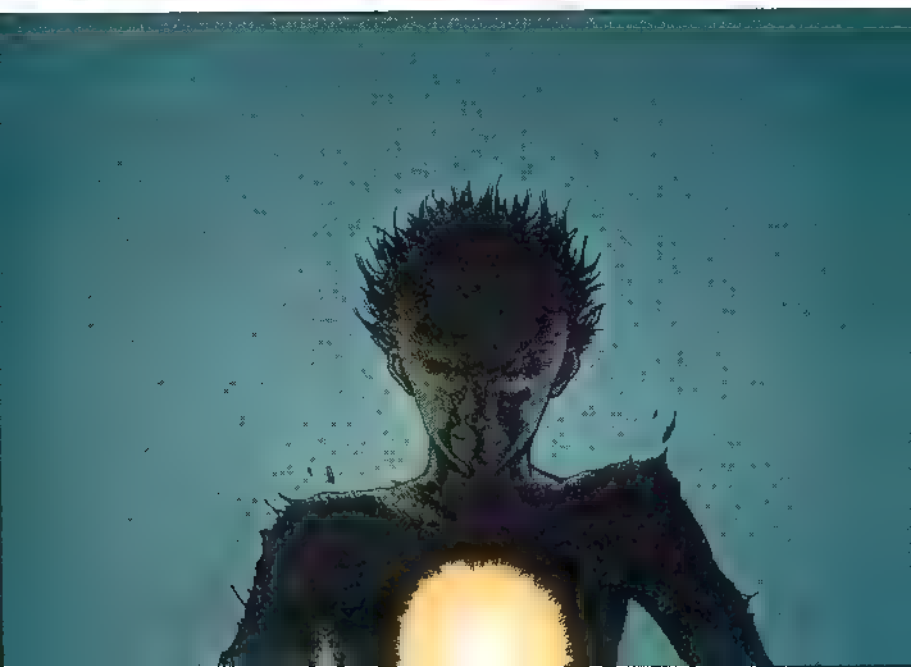
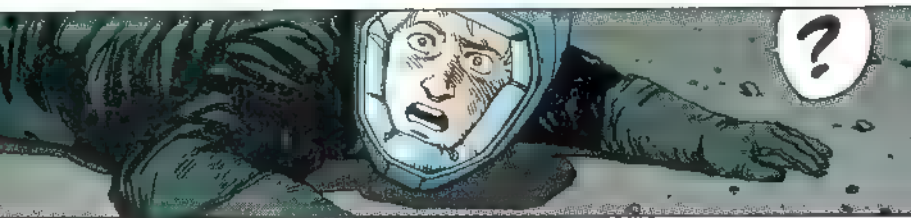
IT WAS HIM, ALL RIGHT!



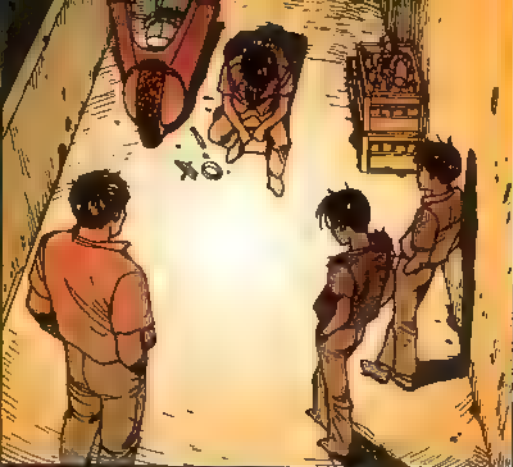
VRRN



# VRRRRN







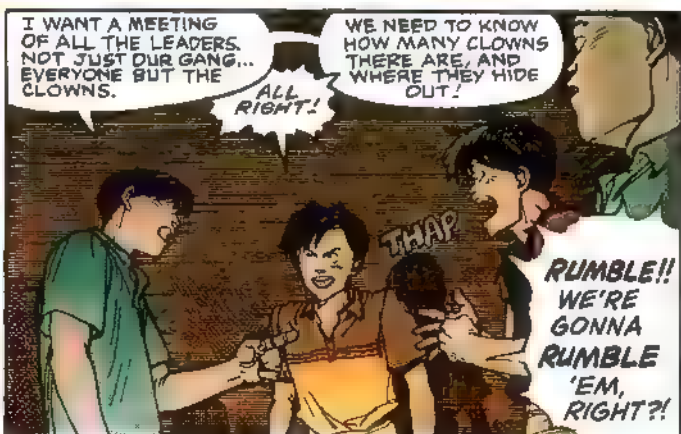
WHADDAYA  
WANNA  
DO?



THMP!S



SNEK



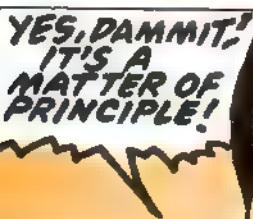
I WANT A MEETING  
OF ALL THE LEADERS.  
NOT JUST OUR GANG...  
EVERYONE BUT THE  
CLOWNS.

ALL  
RIGHT!

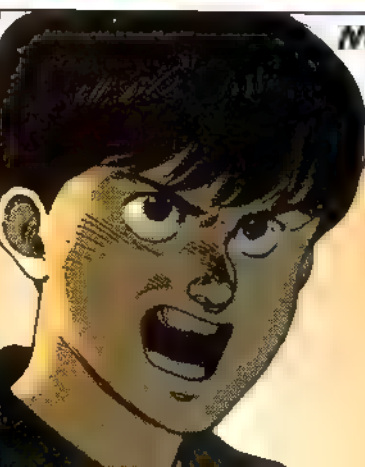
WE NEED TO KNOW  
HOW MANY CLOWNS  
THERE ARE, AND  
WHERE THEY HIDE  
OUT!

THAP

RUMBLE!!  
WE'RE  
GONNA  
RUMBLE  
'EM,  
RIGHT?!



YES, DAMMIT!  
IT'S A  
MATTER OF  
PRINCIPLE!



NO SELF-RESPECTING  
BIKERS LET A  
BUNCH OF  
JUNKIES KICK  
THEIR ASSES!!

SO WHERE  
AND WHEN  
DO WE  
MEET?

RIGHT  
HERE!  
HARU-  
KIYA,  
FIVE  
O'CLOCK  
TOMOR-  
ROW!

YOU  
GOT  
IT,  
HERE  
AT  
FIVE!

THE  
CLOWNS  
ARE  
DEAD  
MEAT!

EVERY-  
BODY  
GOT  
THAT  
?!

YEAH!

HEE-  
HEE-  
HEE-  
HEE!

HOW  
ABOUT...

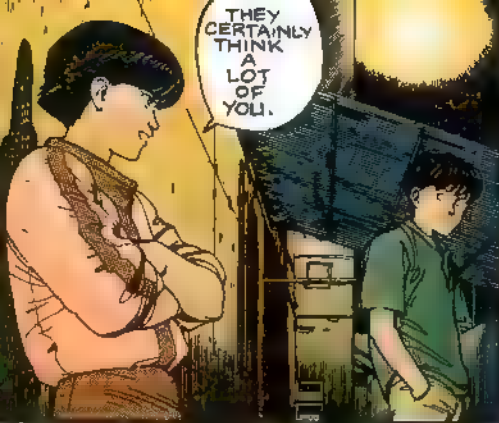
SO  
WHERE  
DO  
WE  
BEGIN?

I'LL TAKE  
THE  
SEVENTH  
DISTRICT...  
THE  
CARBU-  
RE-  
TOR  
BOYS!

I CAN  
TALK  
TO MY  
CONTACTS  
IN  
THE  
WILD  
COCK  
AND  
THE  
PRETTY  
BOMBERS.

REMEMBER,  
TOMORROW  
AT  
FIVE!

DON'T  
HURT  
YOUR-  
SELF!



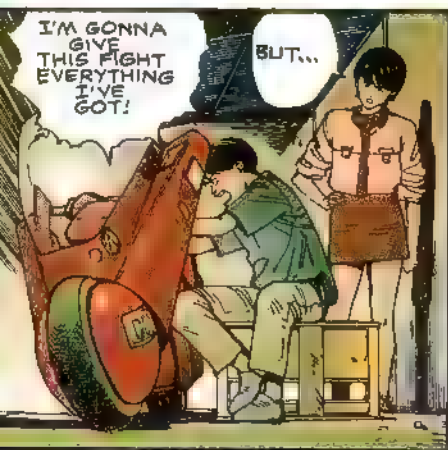
THEY CERTAINLY  
THINK  
A  
LOT  
OF  
YOU.



WELL...I'M  
A POPULAR  
KIND OF  
GUY.

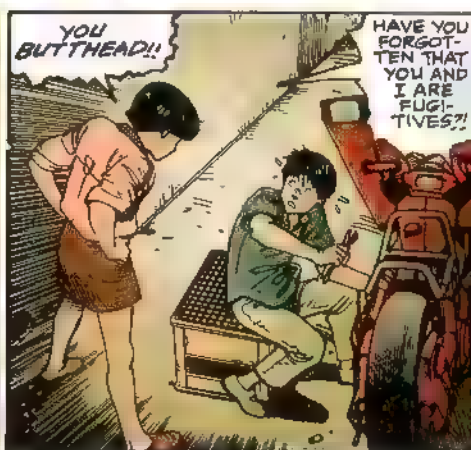


YOU'RE NOT  
ACTUALLY  
PLANNING  
ON GOING  
THROUGH  
WITH IT,  
ARE  
YOU?



I'M GONNA  
GIVE  
THIS FIGHT  
EVERYTHING  
I'VE  
GOT!

BUT...



YOU  
BUTTHEAD!!

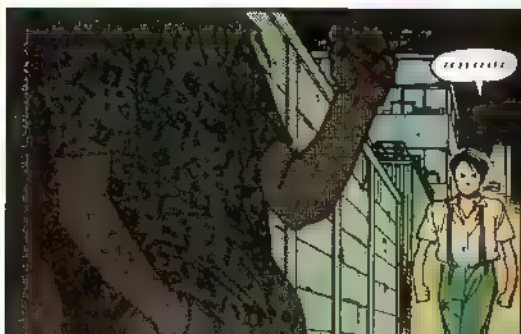
HAVE YOU  
FORGOTTEN  
THAT  
YOU AND  
I ARE  
FUGITIVES?!!



TAK  
TAK  
TAK



HMM...



HEY!





ISN'T  
THIS...  
?

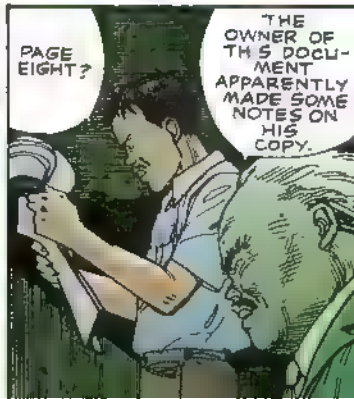


YEAH...  
IT'S A  
COPY  
OF THE  
MATERIAL  
I'VE  
ALREADY  
SEEN,  
NEZU.



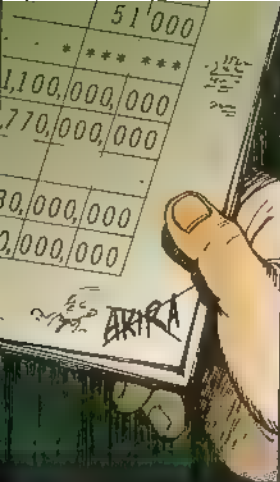
IT'S A  
DIFFERENT  
COPY OF  
THE SAME  
INFORMA-  
TION

LOOK AT THE  
LOWER R GHT  
CORNER OF  
PAGE EIGHT  
RYL.



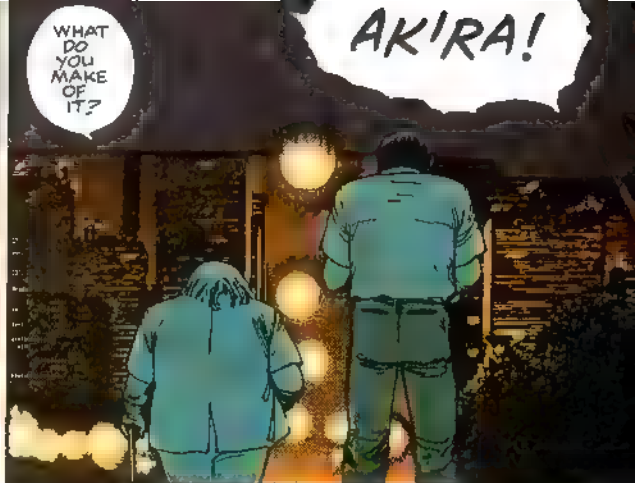
PAGE  
EIGHT?

THE  
OWNER OF  
THIS DOCU-  
MENT  
APPARENTLY  
MADE SOME  
NOTES ON  
HIS  
COPY.



WHAT  
DO  
YOU  
MAKE  
OF  
IT?

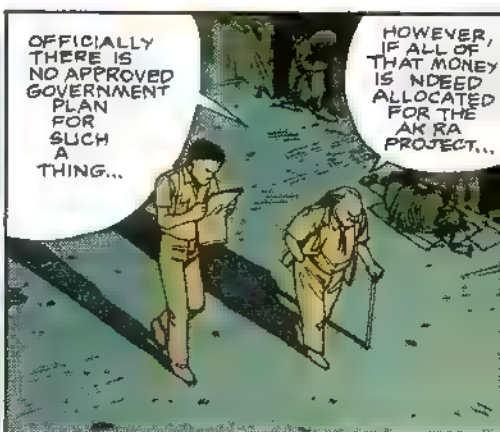
AKIRA!



NEZU...  
YOU  
THINK  
THAT'S  
WHAT  
THIS  
BIG  
BUDGET IS  
FOR?  
AKIRA  
?!

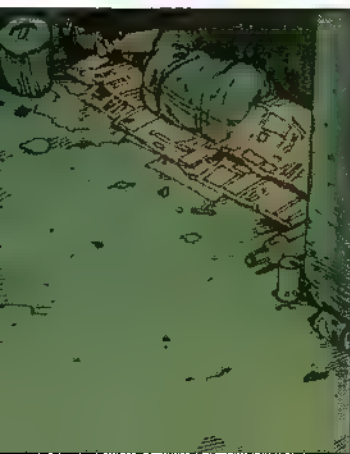


WE CAN'T  
BE CERTAIN,  
RYU.



OFFICIALLY  
THERE IS  
NO APPROVED  
GOVERNMENT  
PLAN FOR  
SUCH A  
THING...

HOWEVER,  
IF ALL OF  
THAT MONEY  
IS NEEDED  
ALLOCATED  
FOR THE  
AKIRA  
PROJECT...

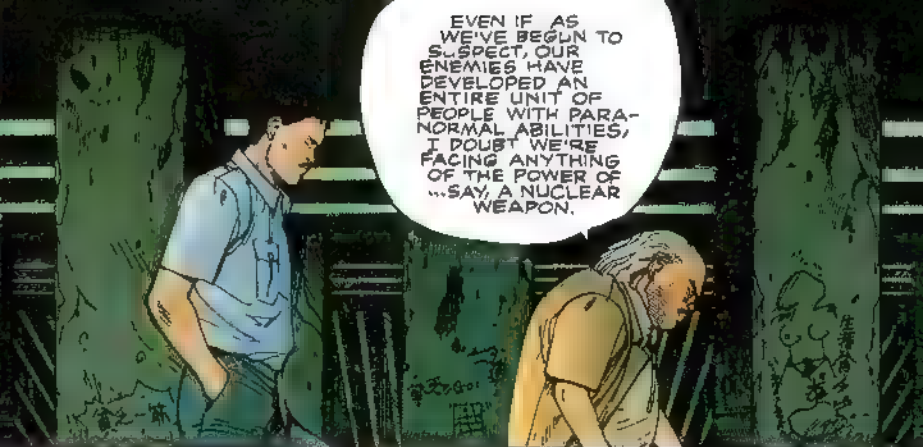


THEN WE  
ARE FACED  
WITH  
SOMETHING  
THE SCALE  
OF WHICH  
IS BEYOND  
ANYTHING  
WE'VE  
YET CON-  
CEIVED.



IF AKIRA IS  
ALL THAT,  
NEZU... THEN  
...WHO WAS  
THAT STRANGE  
LITTLE KID  
WE  
TRIED  
TO HELP?

BAP



EVEN IF AS  
WE'VE BEGUN TO  
SUSPECT, OUR  
ENEMIES HAVE  
DEVELOPED AN  
ENTIRE UNIT OF  
PEOPLE WITH PARA-  
NORMAL ABILITIES,  
I DOUBT WE'RE  
FACING ANYTHING  
OF THE POWER OF  
...SAY, A NUCLEAR  
WEAPON.



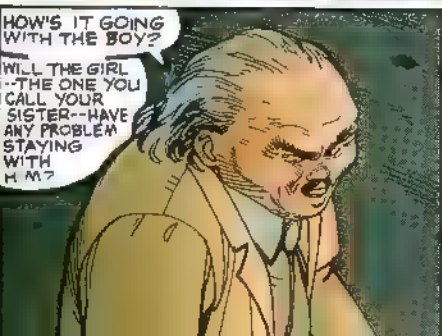
WITH THE  
BUDGET  
THEY'VE  
GIVEN  
THEMSELVES,  
THEY COULD  
DESTROY  
THIS  
PLANET A  
HUNDRED  
TIMES  
OVER.



I AM  
FULLY  
AWARE OF  
THAT, RYU.  
HAVE YOU  
LOCATED  
THE  
PILL AS  
YET?



NO.



HOW'S IT GOING  
WITH THE BOY?

WILL THE GIRL  
--THE ONE YOU  
CALL YOUR  
SISTER--HAVE  
ANY PROBLEM  
STAYING  
WITH  
H.M?



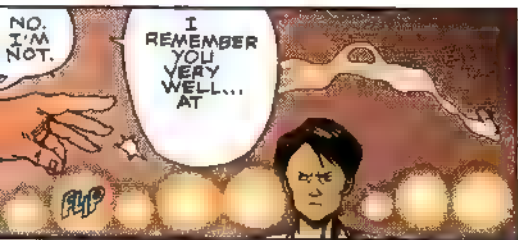
LEAVE ALL  
THAT TO  
ME, NEZU.  
I'VE  
GOT A  
BACKUP  
STANDING  
BY.



HAVEN'T  
I SEEN  
YOUR  
FACE  
SOME-  
WHERE  
BEFORE?



ME?  
YOU  
MUST BE  
THINKING  
OF  
TWO  
OTHER  
GUYS.



NO,  
I'M  
NOT.

I  
REMEMBER  
YOU  
VERY  
WELL...  
AT

WE WERE  
HAVING  
A LOT OF  
TROUBLE  
THE  
NIGHT  
I  
SAW  
YOU.

YOU  
SON  
OF  
A--!

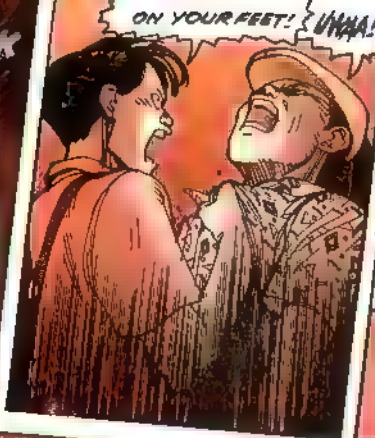






KRAK

KLUNK



ON YOUR FEET! UNHA!



UNGHIK



UP YOURS!



YARRR!



AAH...

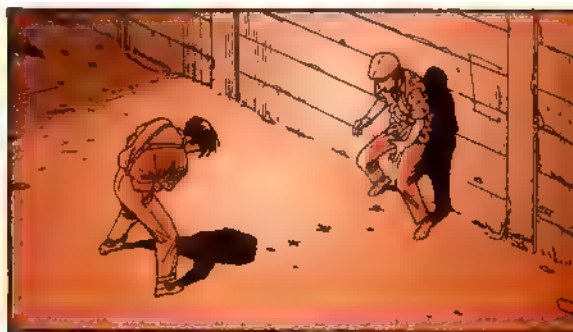


PUFF

PUFF

PUFF

PUFF



WHUD

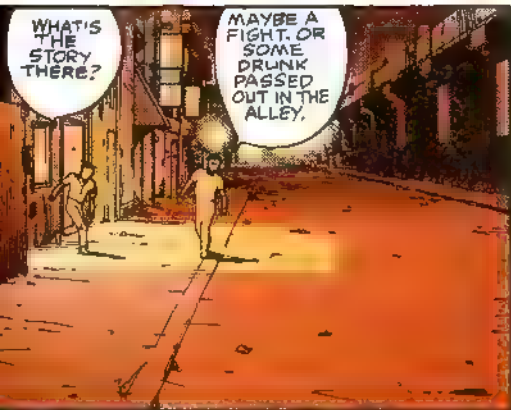


WHUM



WHAT'S  
THE  
STORY  
THERE?

MAYBE A  
FIGHT. OR  
SOME  
DRUNK  
PASSED  
OUT IN THE  
ALLEY.



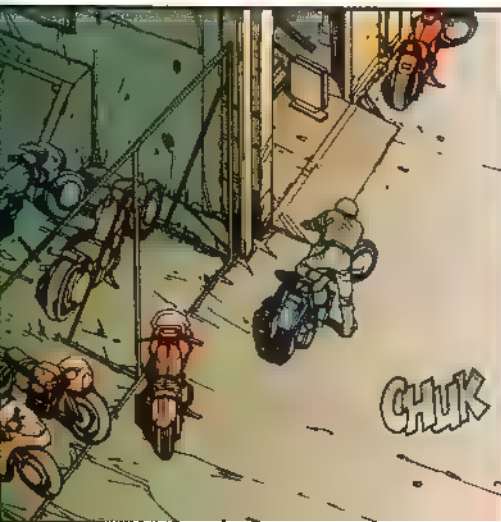
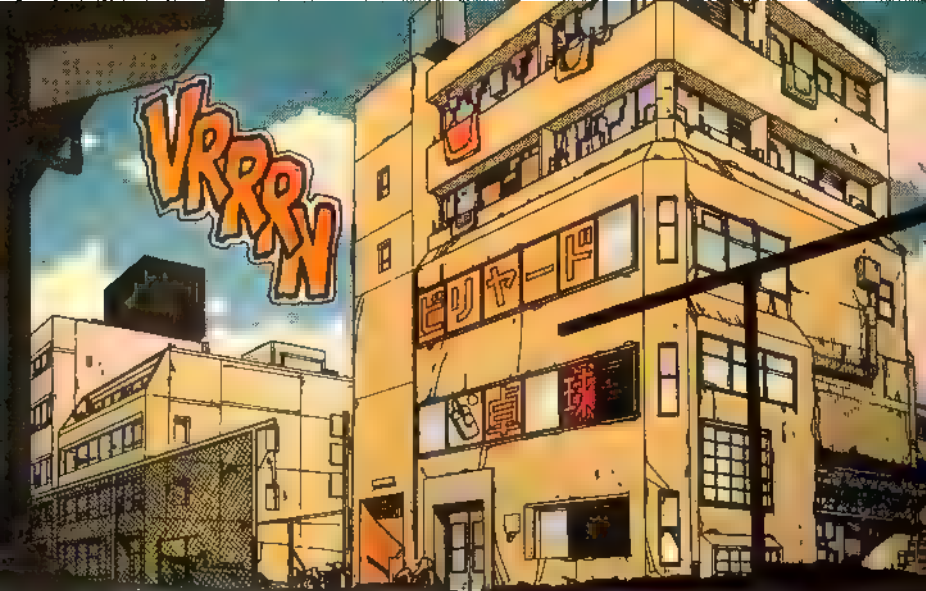
PUFF

PUFF



SOMEBODY...  
COME...  
QUICKLY..



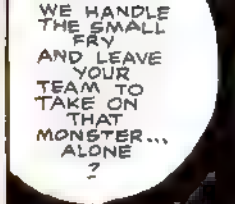








JUST LIKE THAT, YAMAGATA?



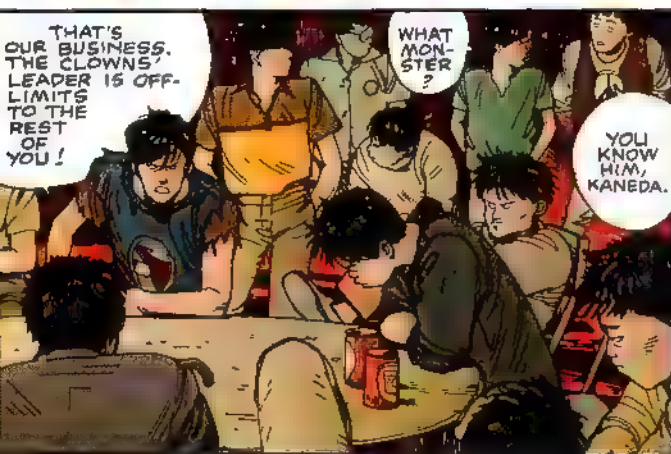
WE HANDLE THE SMALL FRY AND LEAVE YOUR TEAM TO TAKE ON THAT MONSTER... ALONE?



"MONSTER?"



YEAH! WE'LL HAVE THEM RIGHT WHERE WE WANT THEM.



THAT'S OUR BUSINESS. THE CLOWNS' LEADER IS OFF-LIMITS TO THE REST OF YOU!

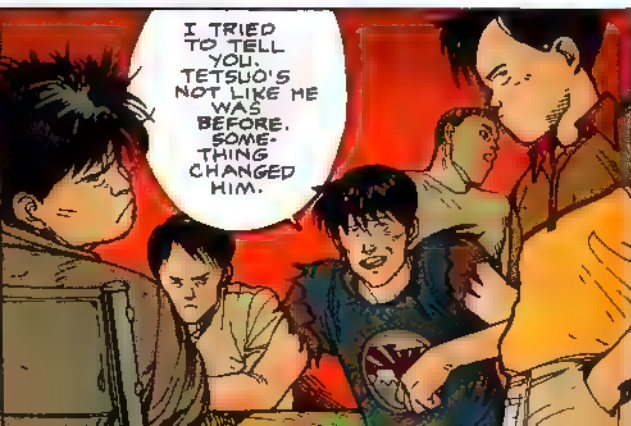
WHAT MONSTER?

YOU KNOW HIM, KANEDA.



HE USED TO BE PART OF YOUR GANG.

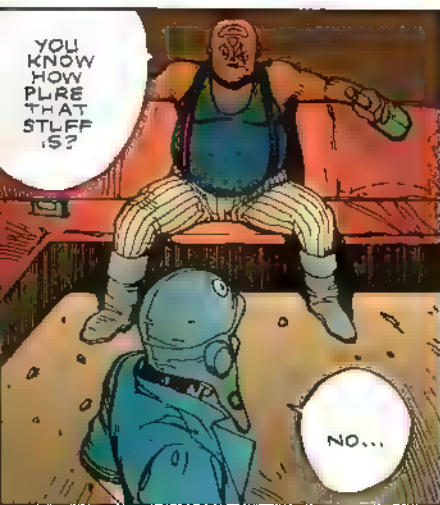
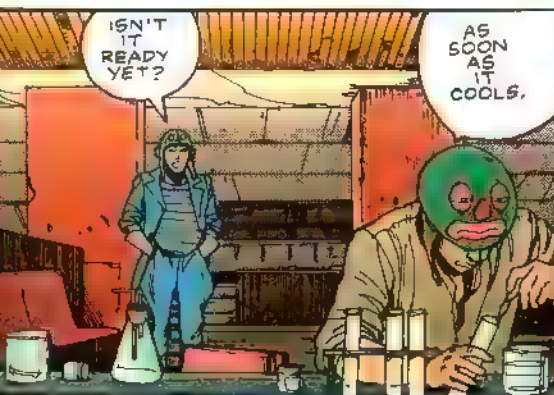
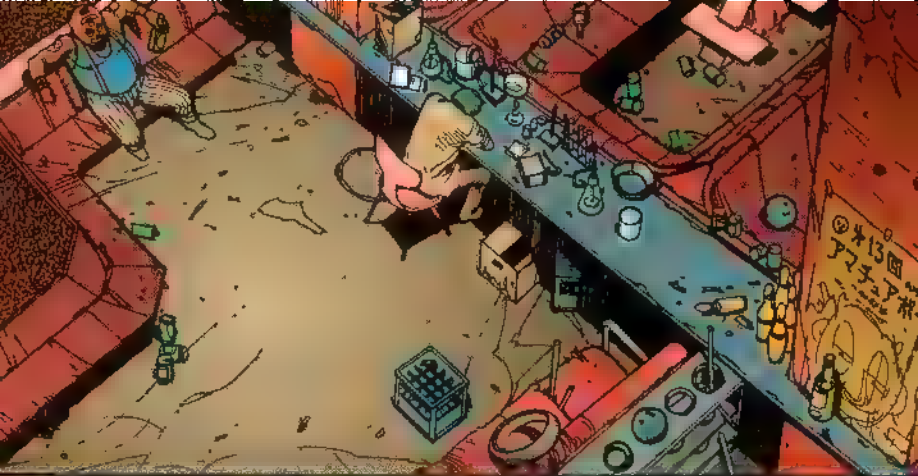
BUT WHY DID YOU SAY HE'S A MONSTER?

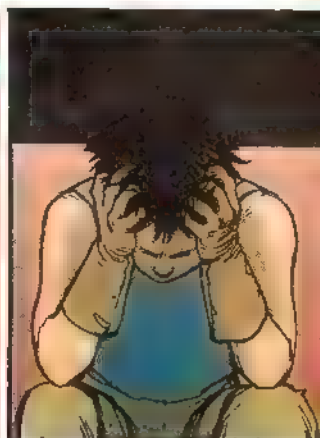
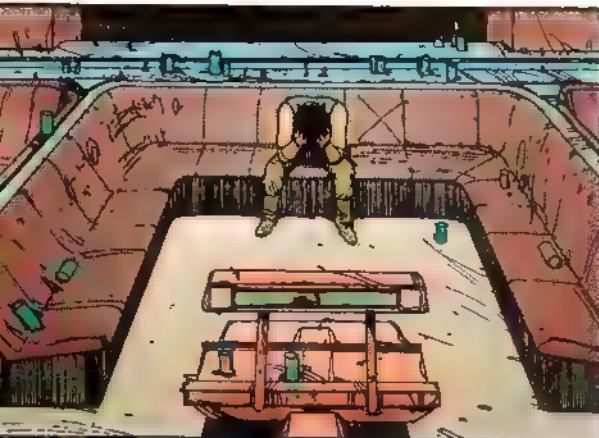


I TRIED TO TELL YOU. TETSUO'S NOT LIKE HE WAS BEFORE. SOMETHING CHANGED HIM.

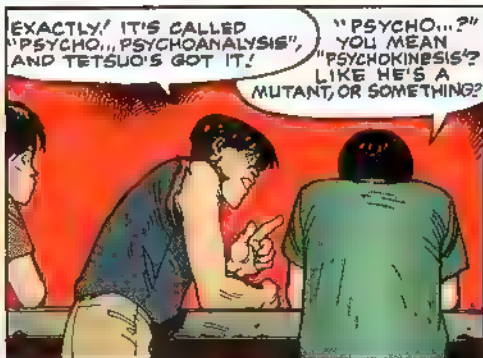
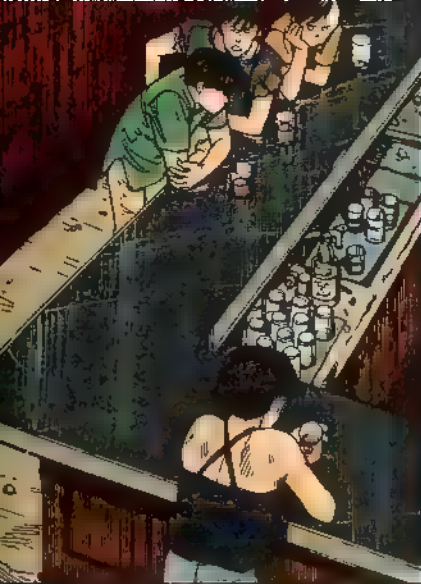


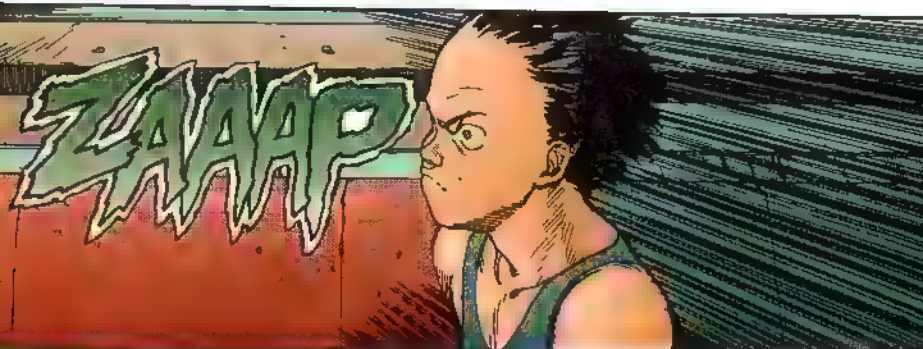
WHATEVER HE IS, HE'S ALL YOURS. HAVE FUN WHEN HE RIPS YOUR HEADS OPEN.





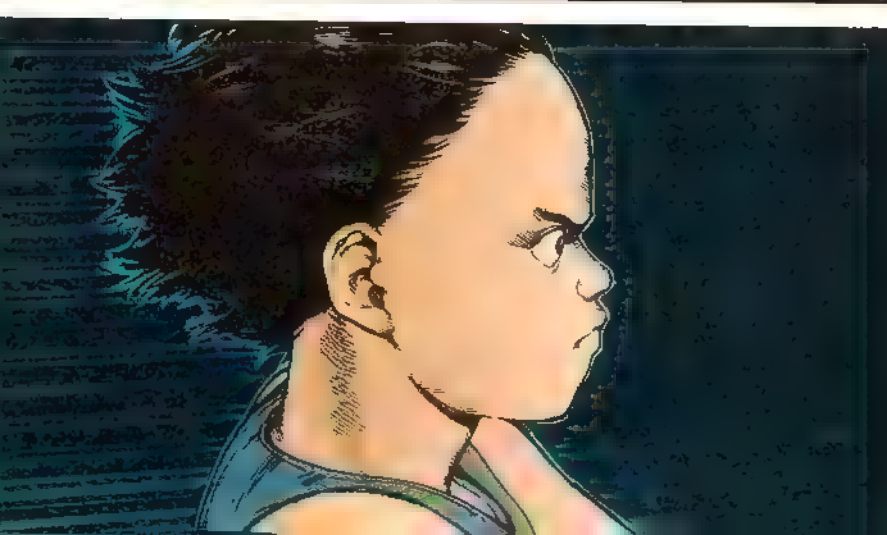
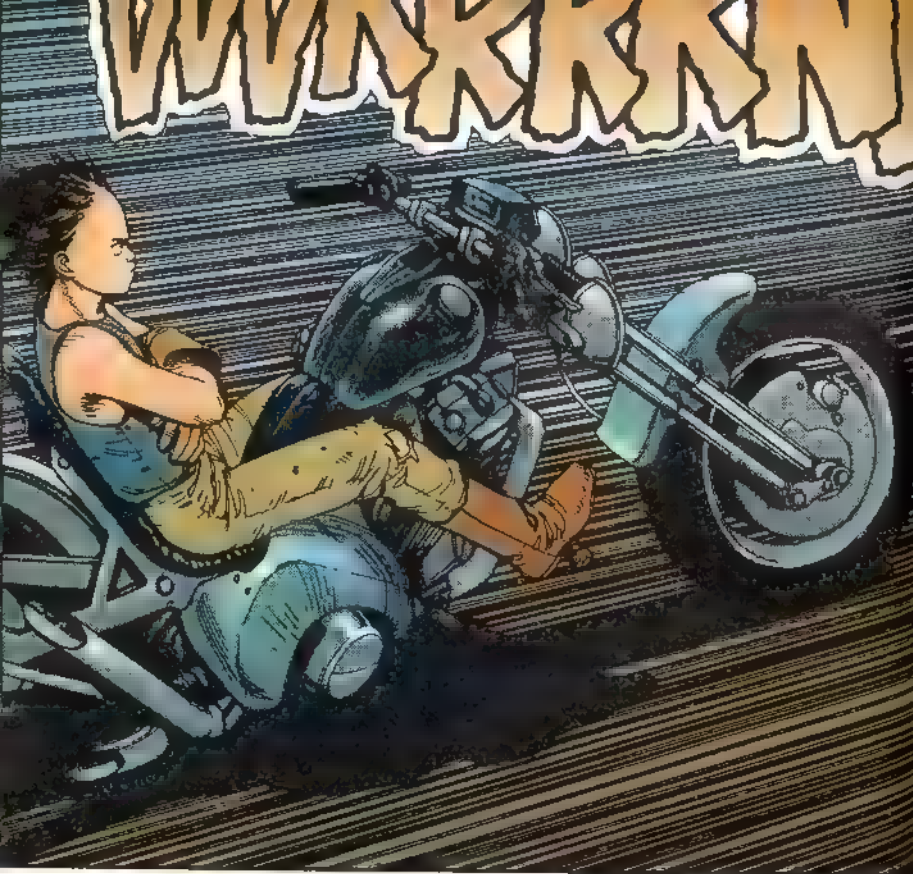


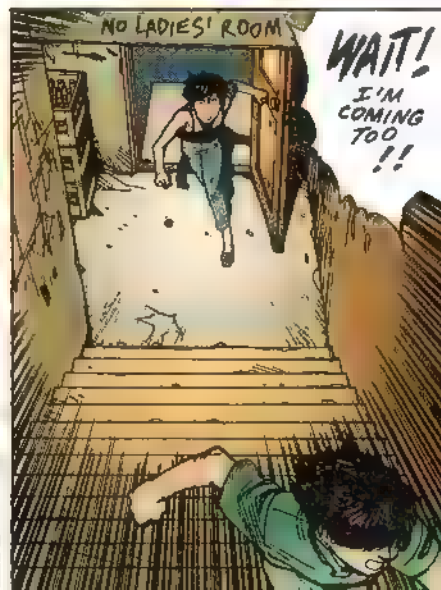
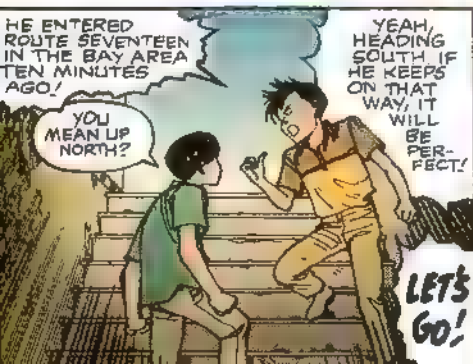












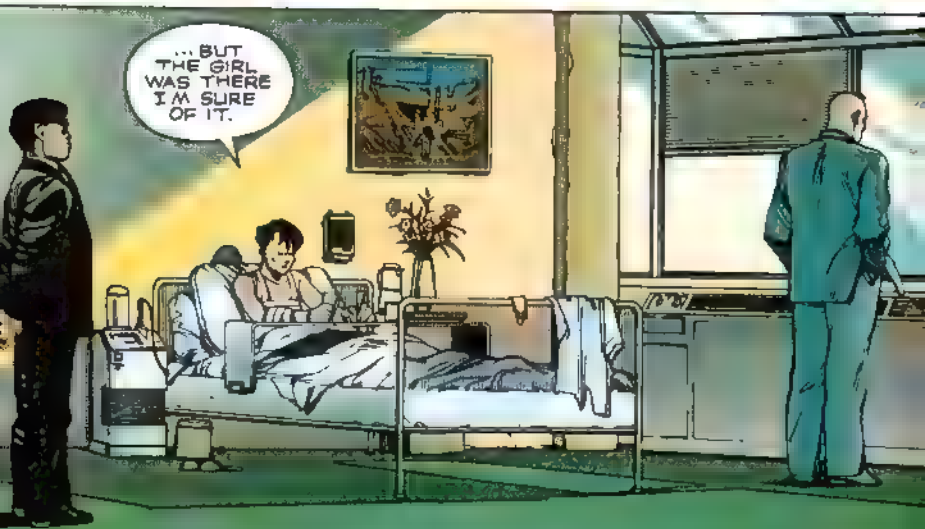


... A BAR CALLED HARUKIYA, RIGHT ON THE BORDER BETWEEN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH DISTRICTS.

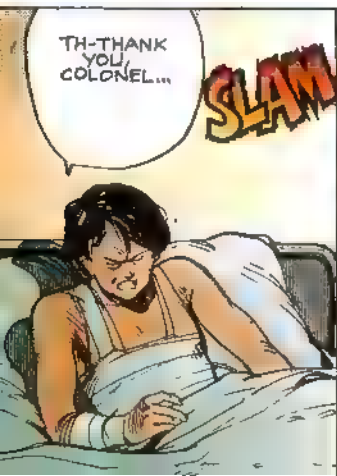
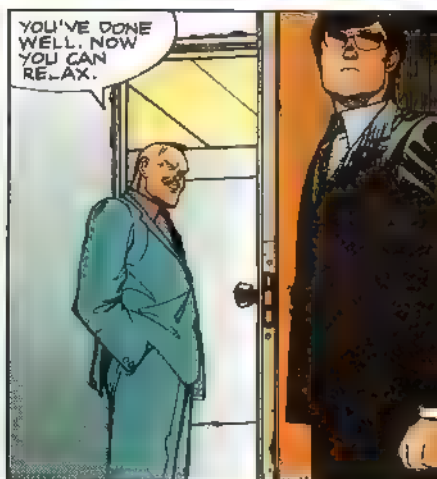
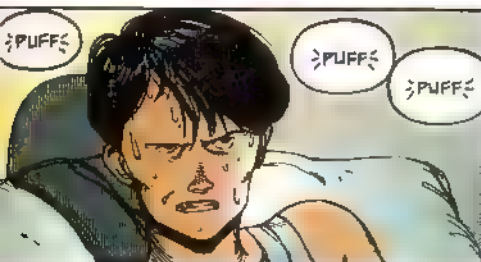
IT'S ALONGSIDE THE EXPRESSWAY.

**AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY**  
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT  
THE FIFTH FLOOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

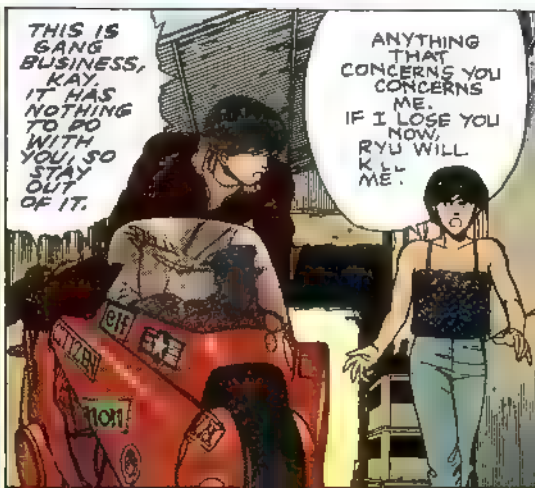
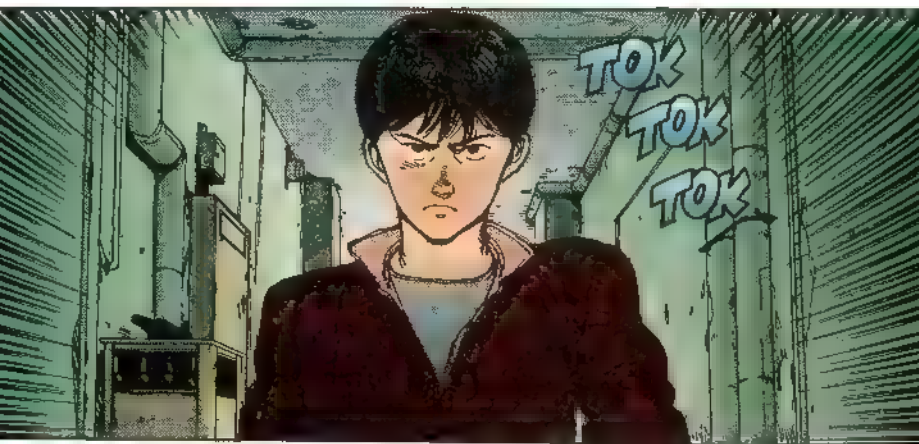
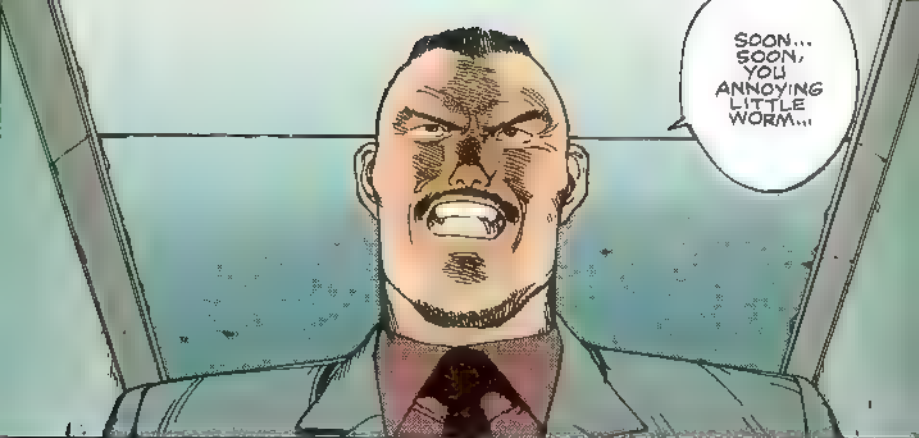
NO, THERE WAS NO SIGN OF THE MAN WITH THE BEARD...







YES, SIR!



COME ON IN  
THERE! LET'S  
MOVE IT!

VRN VRN

HEY, LEND  
IT TO ME,  
WOULD  
YOU?

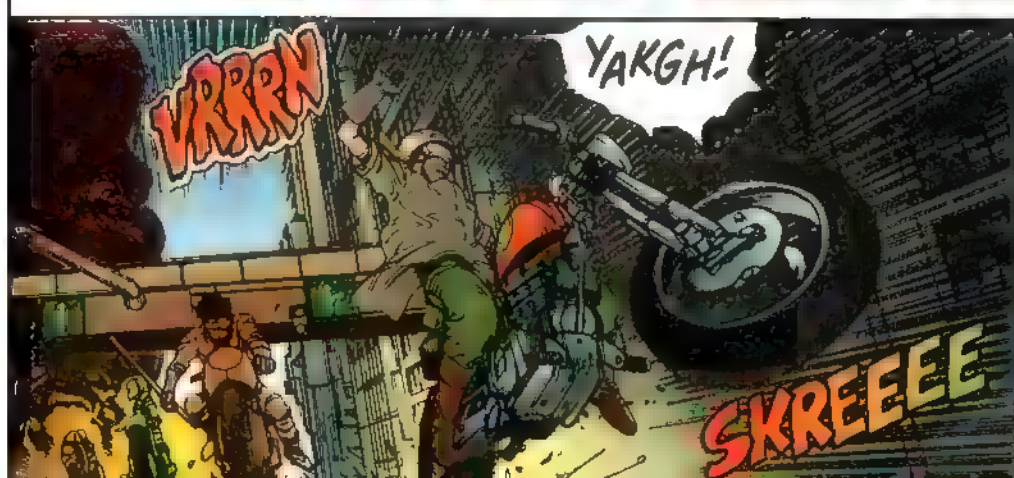
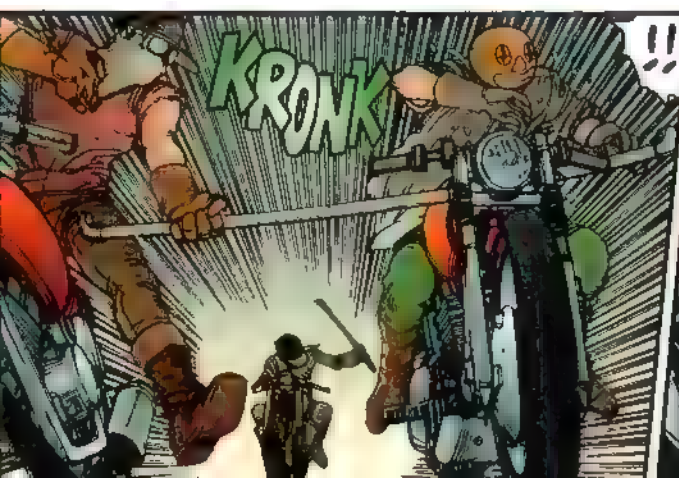
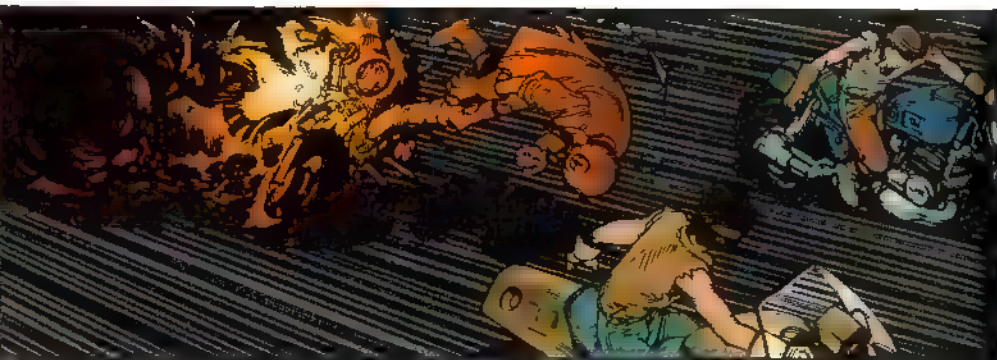
WHAT ARE  
YOU TALKING  
ABOUT?

YOU KNOW,  
I THINK THERE  
WAS STILL ONE  
BULLET LEFT...

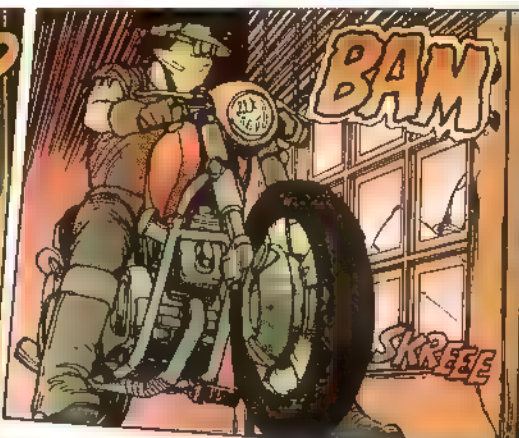
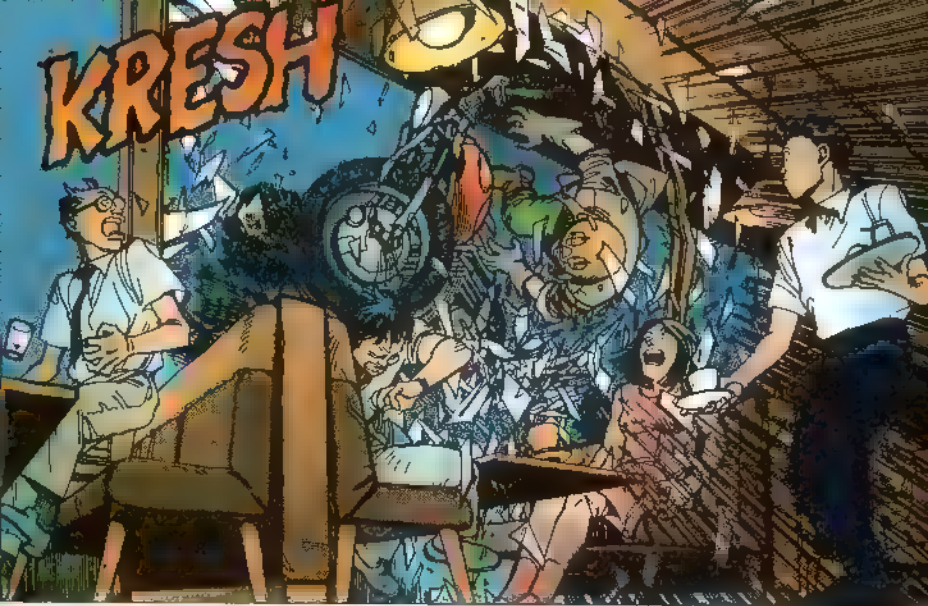
BANG!!

VRRRN

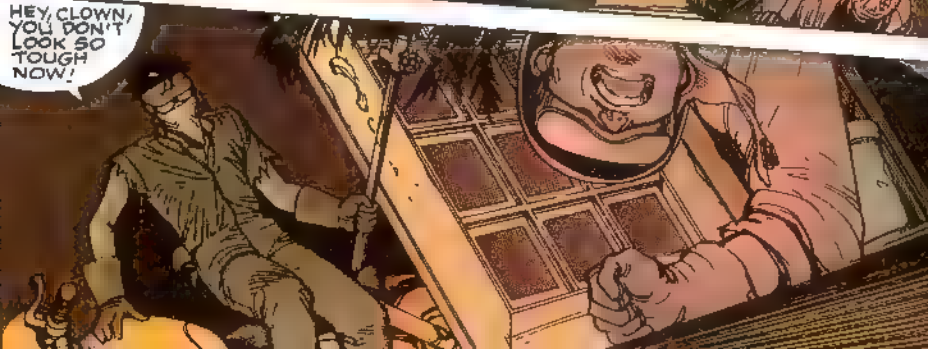


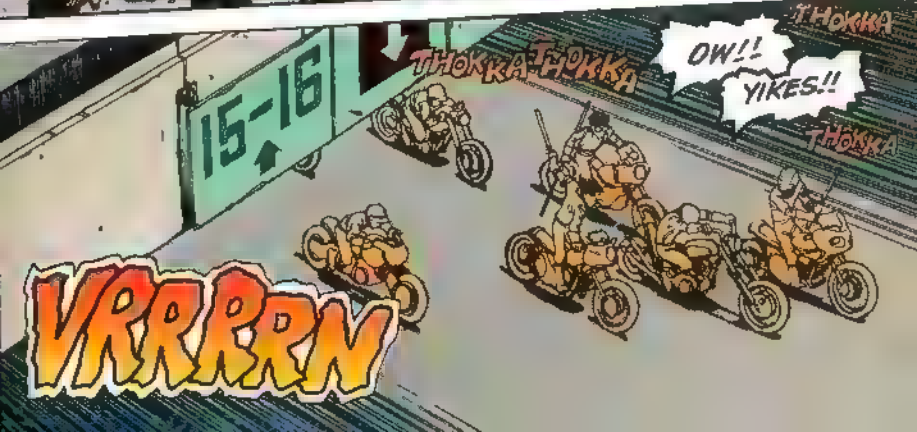
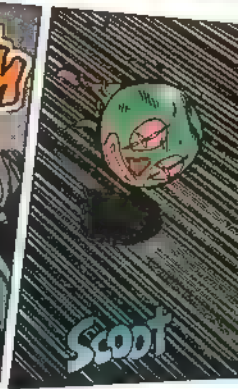
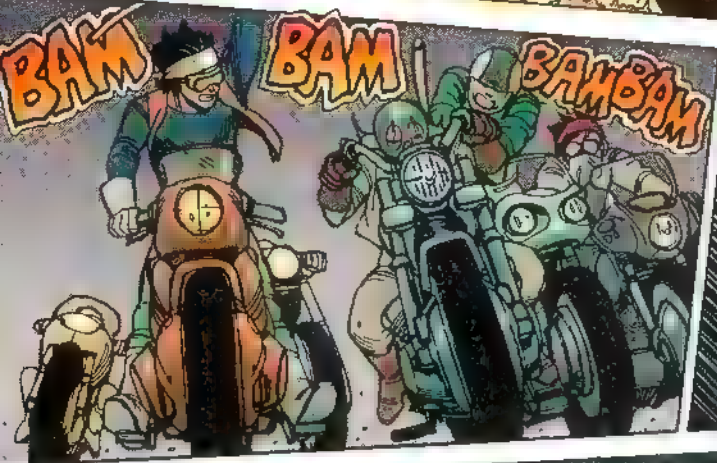
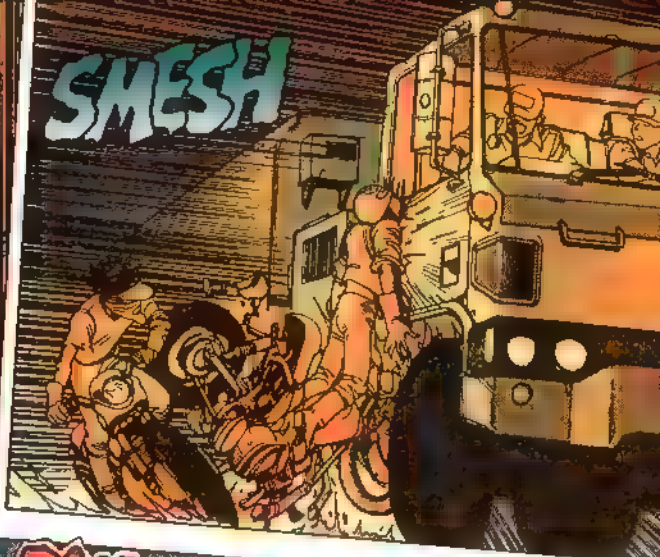




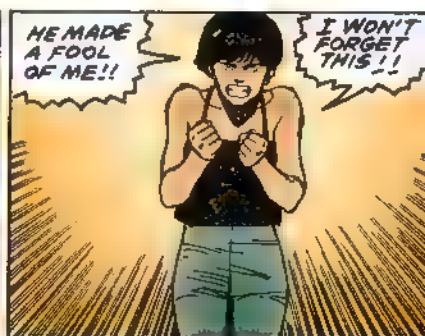
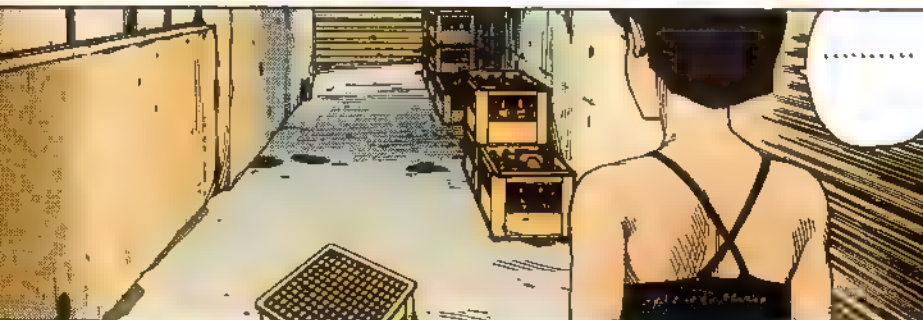


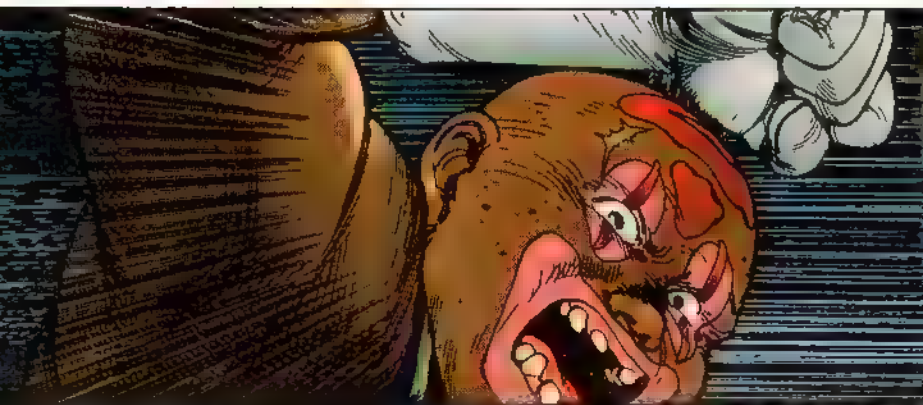
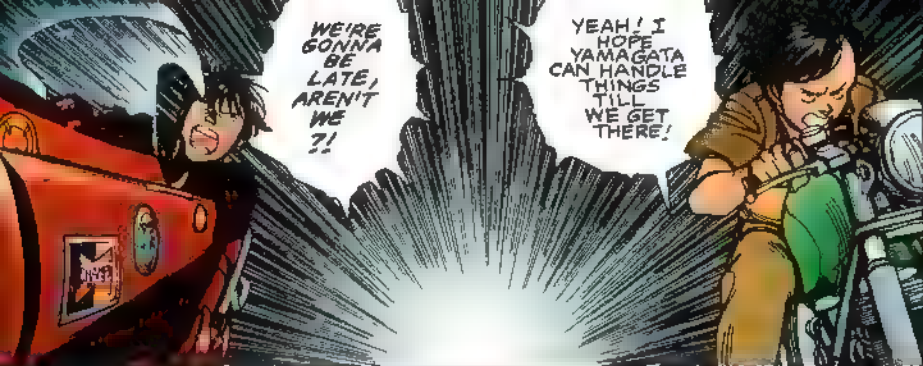
HEY, CLOWN/  
YOU DON'T  
LOOK SO  
TOUGH  
NOW!

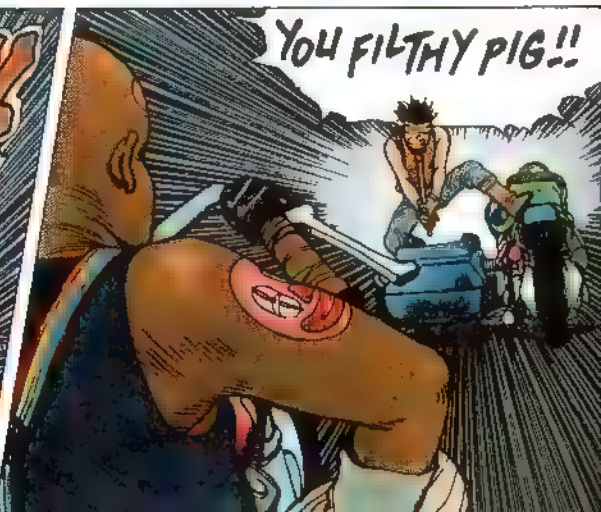
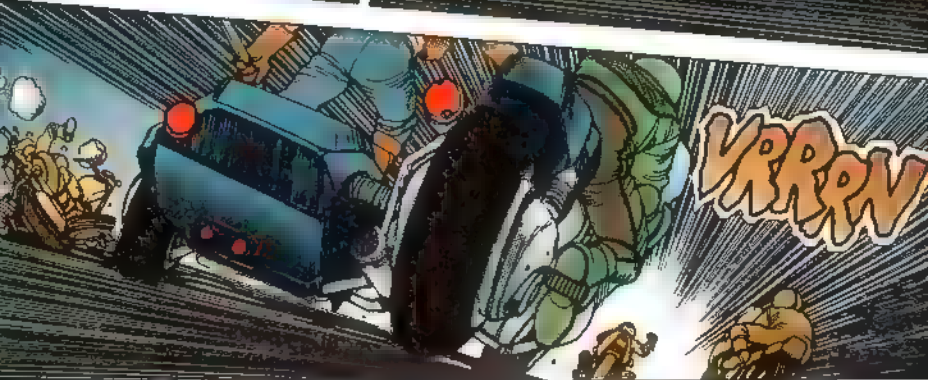
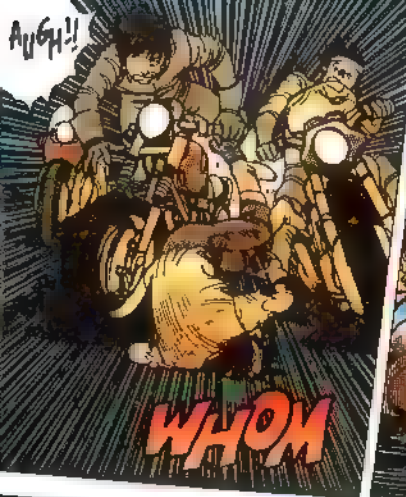




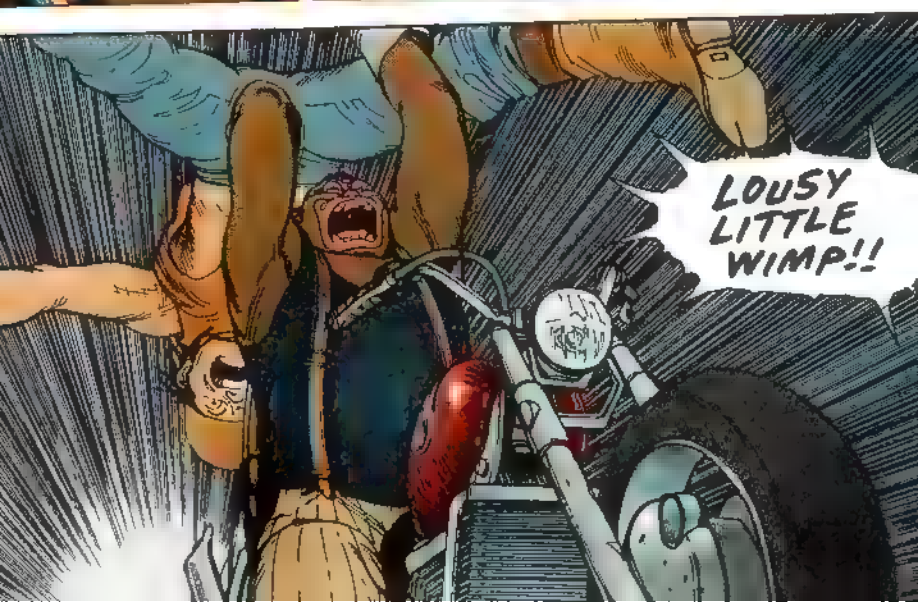
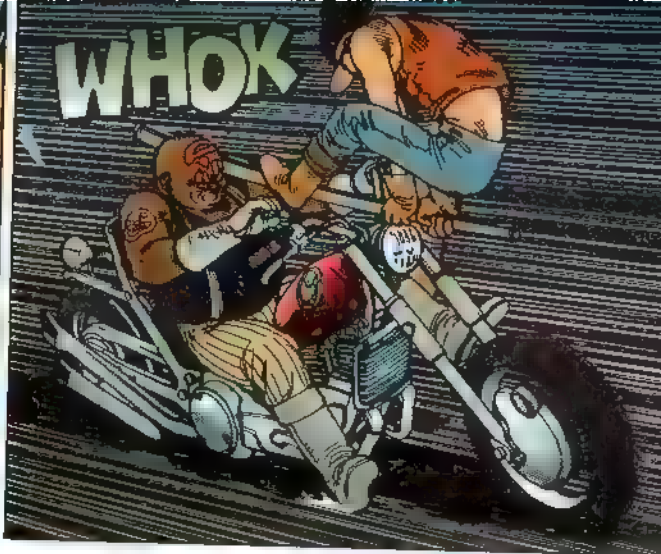








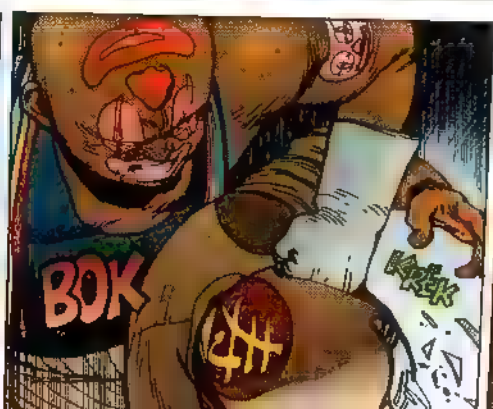
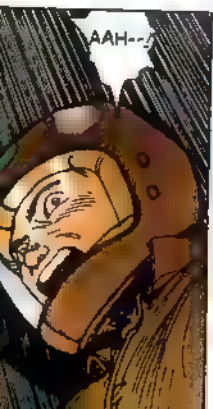
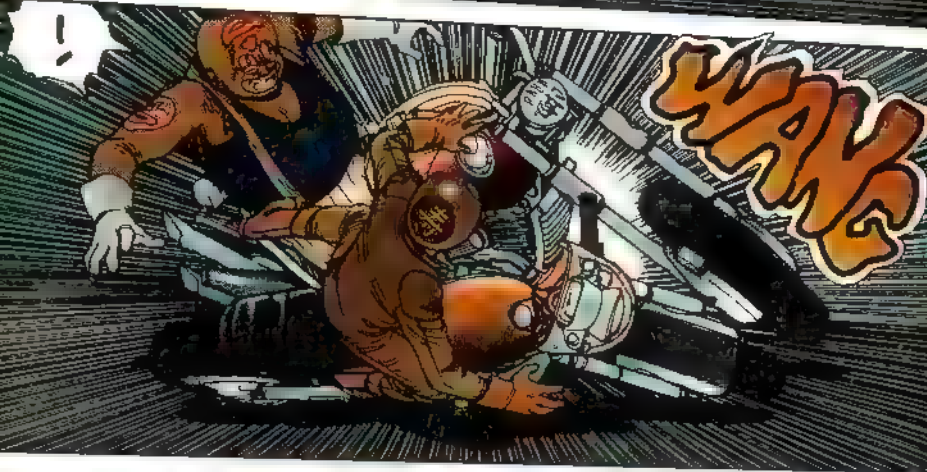




**VRRRRN**



**VNNNNNNNNNN**

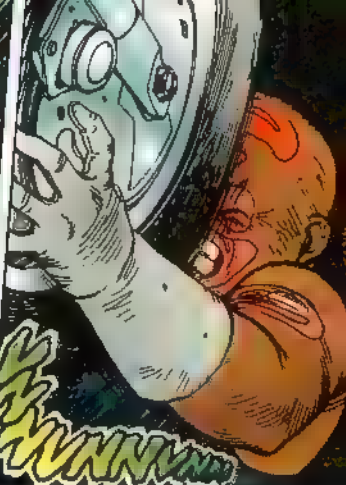






WHOO!

!



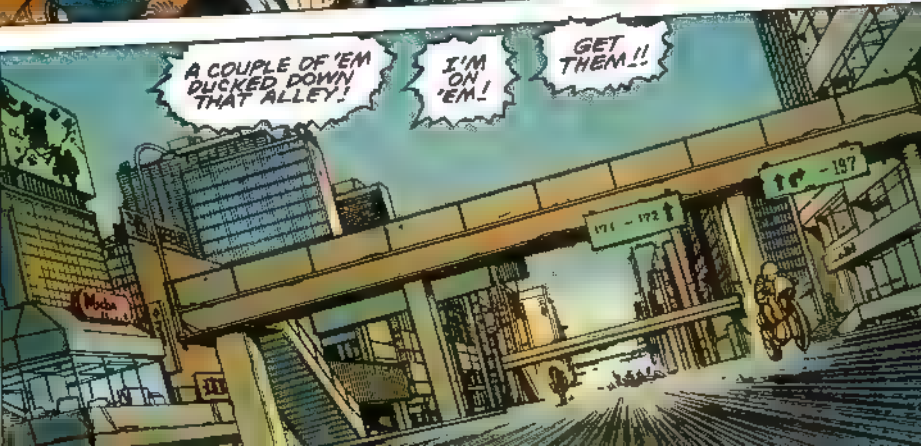
WNNNNN



OKAY, NOW!!

YOU GOT IT!!

NO PRISONERS!



A COUPLE OF 'EM  
DUCKED DOWN  
THAT ALLEY!

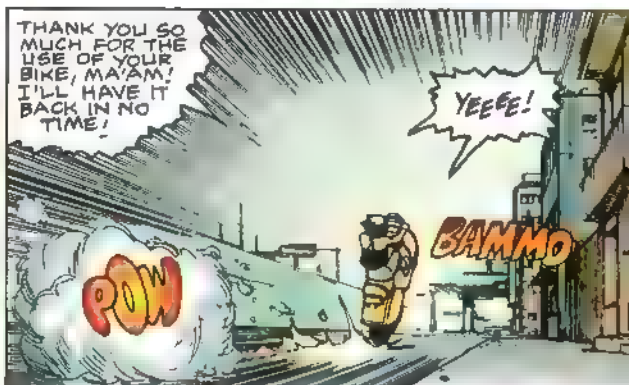
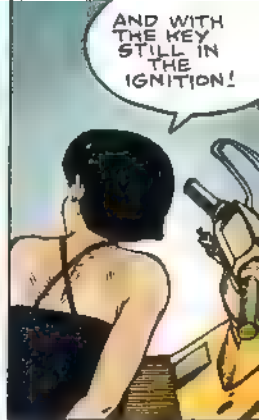
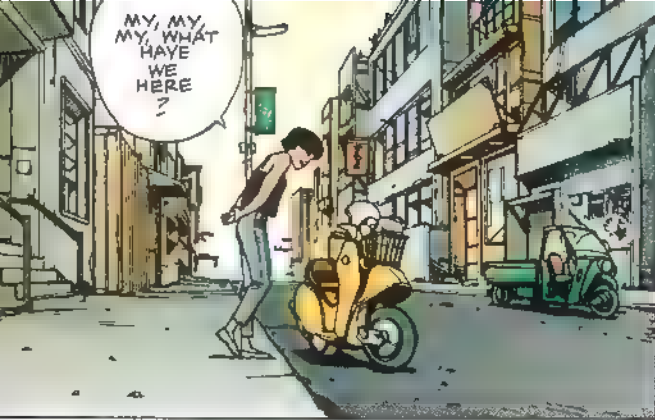
I'M  
ON  
'EM!

GET  
THEM!!

100 - 197

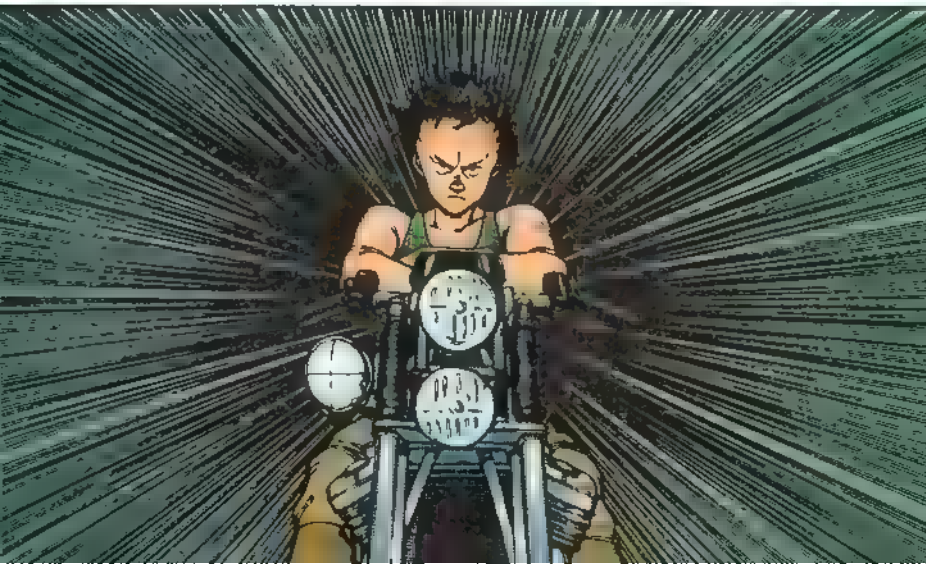
171 - 172

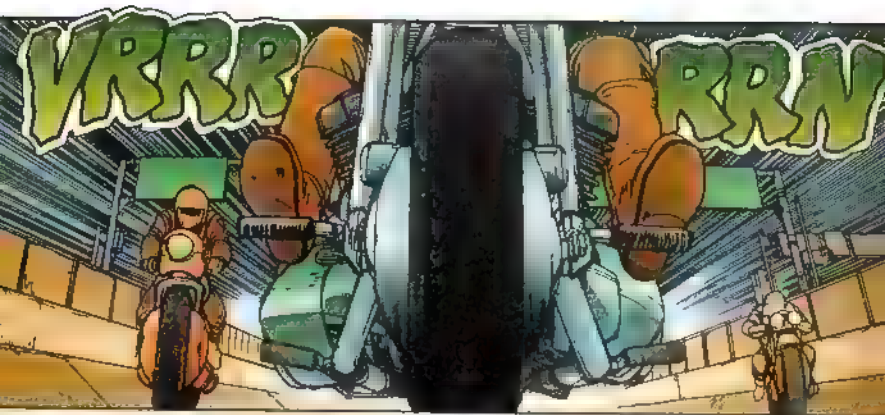




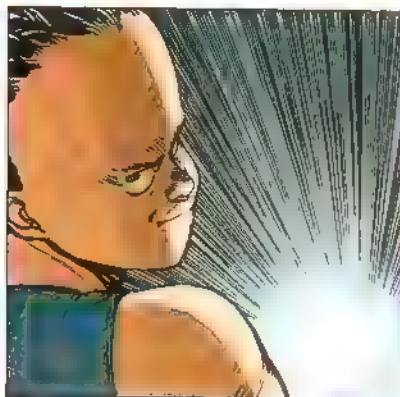


THIS IS THE PLACE!

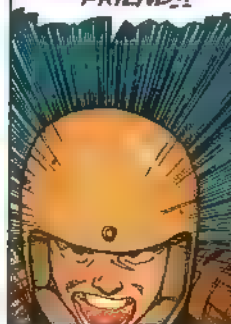




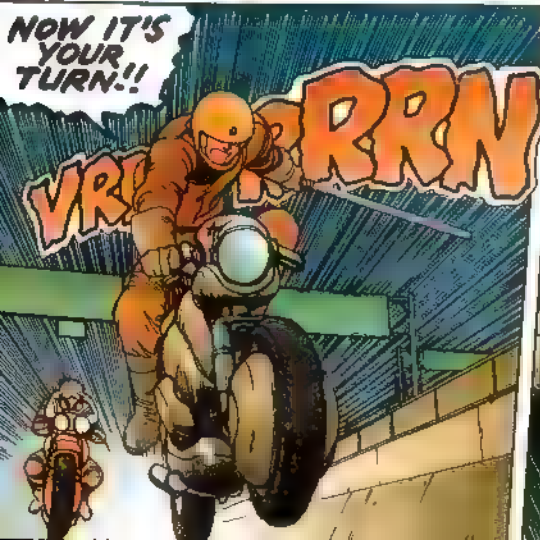
**HOLD IT RIGHT  
THERE, YOU  
SON-~~LIV~~ABITCH!**



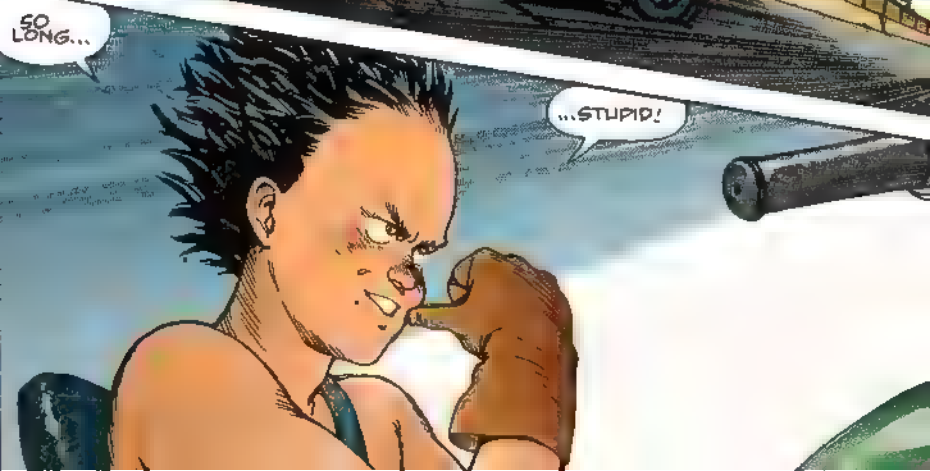
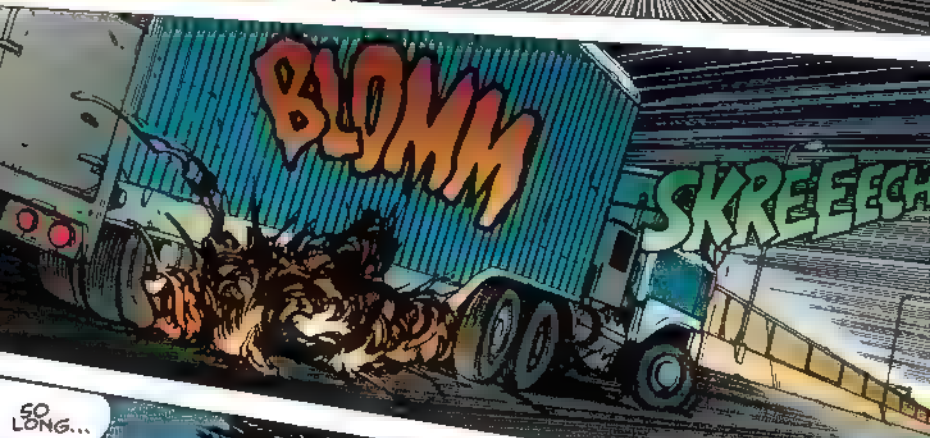
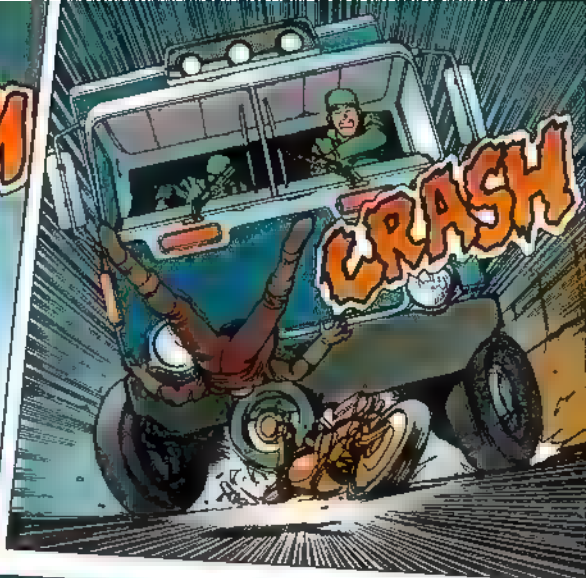
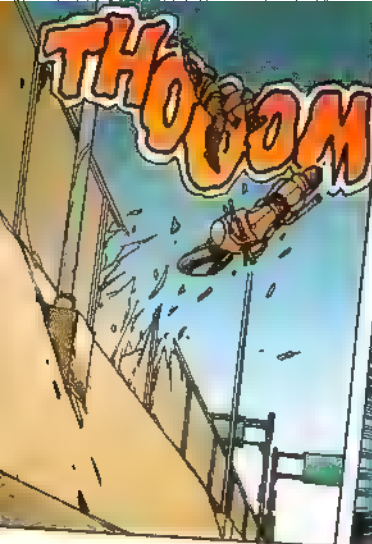
**LAST WEEK YOU  
KILLED MY BEST  
FRIEND!!**

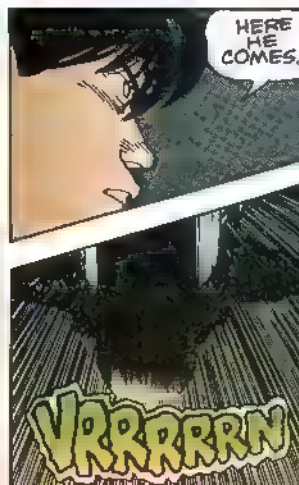
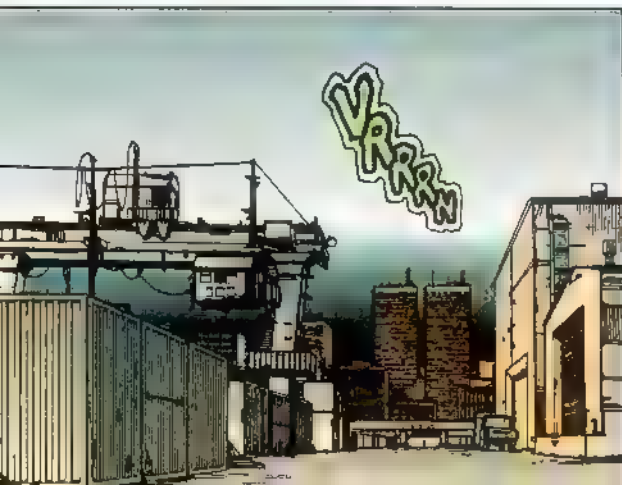
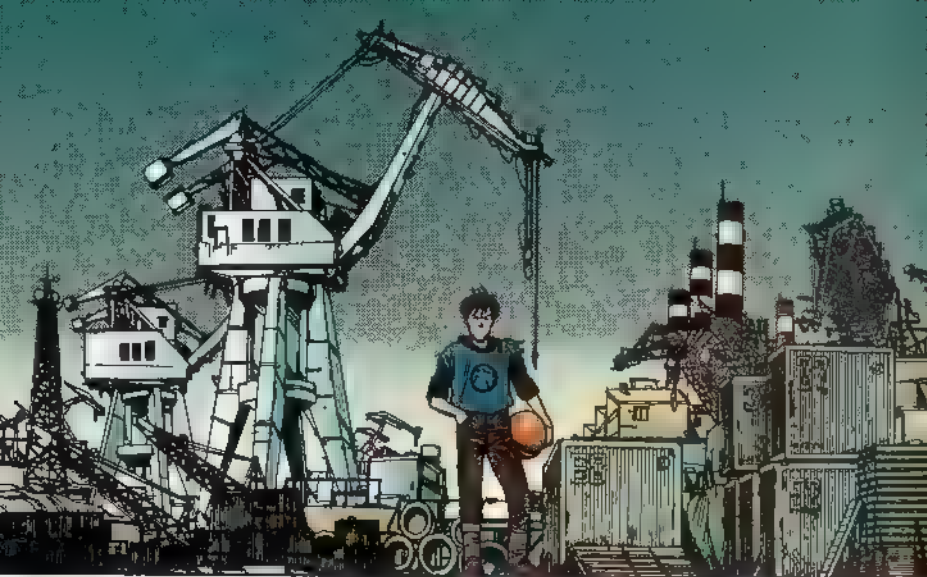


**NOW IT'S  
YOUR  
TURN!!**

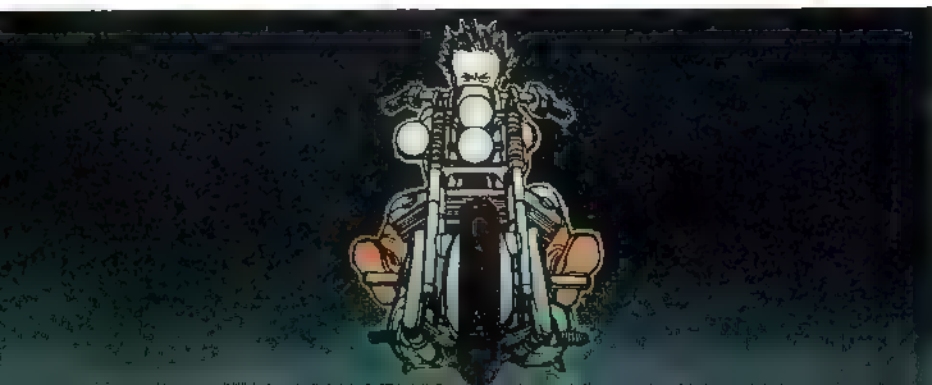






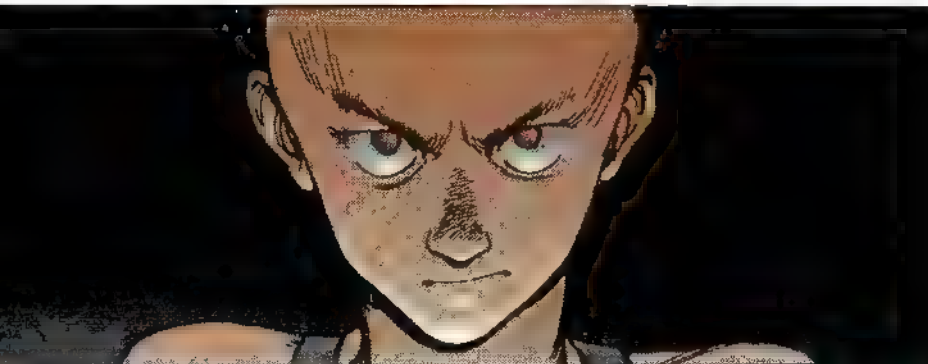


TWEE-WHEEET!!





YOU  
WENT  
TOO  
FAR...



DIDN'T YOU,  
TETSUO?!

VRRRRRRRRN





# AKIRA

MORE SCENES FROM THE ANIMATED FILM

In issue five of our edition of *Akira* we showed material from the animated movie which had its premiere in Tokyo on July 16, 1988. On this and the page that follows, we're happy to provide a further look at the film (the number one attraction in its opening week) which was storyboarded, written, and directed by the creator of *Akira*, Katsuhiro Otomo.

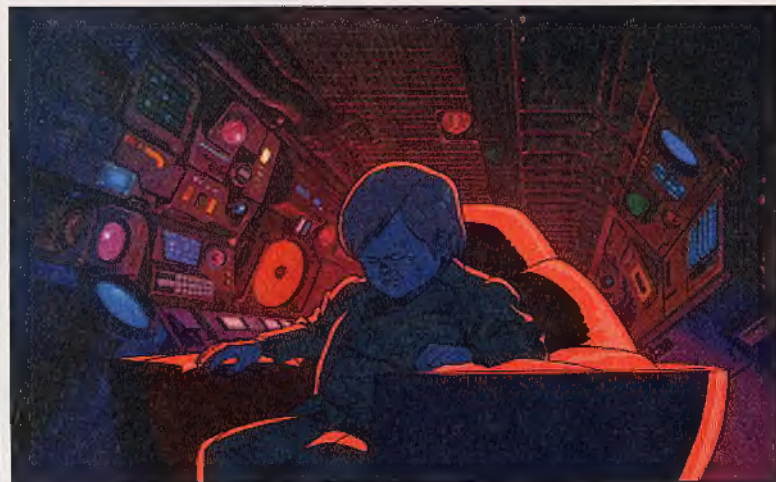
**Above: Tetsuo fights a member of the Clown gang. Note that Otomo has the motorcycles shown with colored tires; this is a development now believed being considered for the future by manufacturers.**  
**Below: one of the character designs for Kaneda.**





**Tetsuo riding on a newly designed motorcycle.**

**Masaru, Number 27, inside the government helicopter searching for his fellow mutant, Takashi, Number 26.**





**KATSUHIRO OTOMO**

writer/illustrator

**YASUMITSU SUETAKE**

chief assistant to Mr. Otomo

**MAKOTO SHIOSAKI**

**SATOSHI TAKABATAKE**

assistants to Mr. Otomo

**HIROSHI HIRATA**

designer, AKIRA calligraph

**AKIRA SAITO**

designer, Kodansha edition

Kodansha Ltd.

**YOKO UMEZAWA**

with **LINDA M. YORK**

translation

**KOICHI YURI**

editor, Kodansha edition

**NORIYUKI OKAZAKI**

**YUKA ANDO**

editorial coordinators

Epic Comics

**JO DUFFY**

english adaptation

**STEVE OLIFF**

colorist

**MICHAEL HIGGINS**

letterer

**MIKE ROCKWITZ**

**HARRY CANDELARIO**

**MICHAEL HEISLER**

production

**MARK CHIARELLO**

editorial assistant, Epic edition

**ARCHIE GOODWIN**

editor, Epic edition

**W**ar in the streets. Neo-Tokyo in the thirty-eighth year after World War III shakes with the thunder of careening motorcycles, rings with the clatter of brutal combat. With chains, with pipes, with the very machines they ride, members of the young fugitive Kaneda's motorcycle gang move to avenge themselves upon their ruthless rivals, the Clowns. But the Clowns have a new leader, Tetsuo. Once Kaneda called him a friend. Now everyone calls him a monster. Altered by forces he does not understand, Tetsuo has become a psychic powered giant. Yet for all his power, he teeters on the brink of madness, beyond control of even the mysterious government forces who helped place him on this path in the hope of countering someone even more deadly, even more threatening. Someone called . . . AKIRA.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA

